THE CALL OF THE WEST

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WHITEWATER IN WINTER.

Frontispiece.

THE CALL OF THE WEST - LETTERS FROM BRITISH COLUMBIA

BY

C. F. J. GALLOWAY

CAPT. R.M.R.E.

WITH 135 ILLUSTRATIONS

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THE CALL OF THE WEST

CHAPTER I

THE SLOCAN

For nearly two years I was in the Slocan,[1] that country of magnificent "has-beens," perchance also of "will-be." The decline in the price of silver during the first decade of this century caused a flourishing, booming country to become a place of splendid ruins.

In 1889 Dr. Dawson, the Grand Old Man of the Canadian Geological Survey, made his way in to Kootenay Lake guided by Indians, who paddled him up the length of that magnificent sheet of water, surrounded by a wilderness of mountains.

In 1899 Nelson, Kaslo, Sandon, New Denver, Slocan City and other towns flourished in the district, each with its palatial hotels, its teeming saloons and gambling hells, its Opera House, and all the conveniences of a home. In the time of the great rush it was impossible to get a bed in Kaslo, all the large hotels were constantly packed, even the billiard-tables being occupied.

In 1909 what a picture of departed glory! Look at the Slocan Hotel in Kaslo with its enormous dining-room, its hundred bedrooms! Other hotels all round, all deserted, boarded up, without even

[1] A mining district in West Kootenay. The accent is on the second syllable.

notices offering them for sale, for there is nobody to buy them. The poor old Opera House pasted all over with advertisements; empty business blocks all round!

And if Kaslo is a city of the past, what about Sandon? Its one street was formed by boarding over the creek, because the valley was too narrow to build anywhere else; the mountains rise sheer up on either side for thousands of feet; they say the sun does manage to squeeze down between them on occasions, but those must be very rare.

Kaslo is bright and sunny, on the shore of the lake, but Sandon, well, even in its palmy days it can hardly have been very bright and cheerful!

But in those days men didn't trouble about natural attractions: Sandon, with its saloons and gambling dens, its Opera House and other places of amusement, was one of the liveliest camps in all the wild and woolly West; money flowed like water, and the tales they tell of those "good old times," well, the less said about them the better!

Talking of mining camps, a word of explanation may be useful to the uninitiated. The word "camp" used to be associated in my mind with tents, but that is not the case here: a mining camp is a district which depends for its existence upon the mining industry, and which, when the mines are exhausted, or closed down for any reason, vanishes off the map, after a life of anything from a few weeks up to half a century or more. The buildings consist in the earlier stages of log cabins, and later on of substantial frame buildings of sawn lumber. The word "camp" is also used in a narrower sense to describe the group

of buildings at any particular mine, which in the case of some of the larger mines constitutes quite a town in itself.

A deserted or a moribund mining camp is certainly a desolate place, but the Slocan is not dead. The price of silver has improved; good ore has been found at depth in some of the older mines, and it is not unlikely that the vast quantities of zinc ore which are now thrown away, or shipped at a very small profit, may before long be a marketable product. The Slocan seems destined to enter upon a new period of prosperity.

But for Kaslo, and the regions along the shores of the lakes, a new industry has come in; Kootenay Lake is already well known as a fruit-growing district. Empires may rise and empires may fall, but Kaslo will remain, and although there may be no more wild booms there, it will be all the better without them.

In the old days there was great rivalry between Kaslo and Nelson, but that is long past; Nelson has long established its pre-eminence as the distributing centre for West Kootenay, and is quite a city, ranking fifth in the province.

* * * * *

To any one visiting the country for the first time, the steamer trips over the long, narrow lakes (on the Arrow Lakes from Arrowhead to West Robson, and then, after a short railway journey to Nelson, the delightful trip up Kootenay Lake to Kaslo) is a wonderful experience. The succession of peaks rising on either side of the lake, which is nowhere more than about three miles wide, the occasional peep at a glacier, the fruit farms

nestling at all points where there is sufficient level ground near the lake shore, the little mining camps, the unexpected beauties of Nature revealed on rounding points, the rocky bluffs with their dense capping of fir, pine, and hemlock, the pretty little cove suddenly revealed with its cosy-looking house and green grass plot, its vegetable garden, dignified by the name of "ranch," for that word is used in British Columbia to designate almost any patch of cultivated ground: rather a shock after associating the word all one's life with endless prairies and millions and millions of wild cattle!

The steamer pulls up at one place to throw off a parcel, no doubt from Timothy Eaton's, that great department store in Winnipeg which supplies half the West, to the great disgust of the retail dealers in the smaller towns. At another place there is no sign of habitation, but a woman appears on a little floating wharf, and hands a letter to the purser.

And the passengers on board, what a motley collection! For here, as in all the local steamers in the West, there is only one class, called by courtesy "first." Look at that little group of Englishmen who keep so much to themselves. They are obviously fruit-farmers returning from a day in Nelson. They will gradually drop off before we have proceeded very far. Two of them are retired Army men, the others young fellows who have never done anything since they left college. Their dress, no less than their accent, labels them unmistakably. There is one with a supercilious air, who has "no d——d use for this beastly country, don't you

know." He was sent out by his people, and is maintained by them, being a "remittance man." He has tried his hand at several things out here, but finds that one has to work in order to earn a living, and that doesn't suit him. It is not the work that matters so much, if people would only appreciate one's condescension and treat one with proper respect, but "these beastly Canadians" have the impudence to treat one as an equal! No, "this is a rotten country; it is not a fit place for a gentleman, and as soon as I can get my mother to send me the fare back I am going straight home!"

Unfortunately, there are a great many of this type, and they are so loud in their talk that many Canadians get the impression that they are typical Englishmen, and form their opinions of Englishmen accordingly.

On this occasion, however, our friend is in the minority, and does not meet with the sympathy he craves, for the rest of the group are true Englishmen who have been through the mill and come out on top.

What a contrast is presented by that other group over there! They are Swedish miners, fine, big, handsome men, with blue eyes, thick blond hair, and heavy moustaches. Two of them are working in the Whitewater Mine, and have been for a spree in Nelson, from which they have not yet recovered. They have brought the third man with them to look for a "yob." They are singing half the time, and a bottle is frequently in evidence. If they know you, they will want you to take a pull at the bottle with them, for good fellowship, but they will

annoy nobody, the liquor only serving to make them happy, and to accentuate their habitual good nature, for they are just great big children. The large Scandinavian immigration into Western Canada is a fine thing for the country, contributing a very desirable element into the composite race that is being built up.

Then look at those two sleek, clean-shaven men, who are always in animated conversation with some one, generally with a group. They have a never-failing stock of anecdotes, and all the latest jokes from the outside world. They get into conversation with everybody before the trip is over. There is no mistaking their vocation; one of them represents a dry-goods house in Toronto; the other is selling suburban lots in Calgary, a subdivision which he really intended to keep for his private friends, but he has still just a few lots left, and he has taken rather a fancy to you, and would like to see you doing really well and making good returns on your money; and then the terms are so ridiculously easy, why, you will be able to turn it over at a profit of 50 per cent. before you have made the third payment if you want to! He knows just what you want, and has a lot right here that will suit you down to the ground; he was keeping those three for his brother-in-law in Regina, but he will be able to make it straight with him. You can have either of those for a hundred dollars, five dollars a month; why, you won't know that you are paying anything. Which shall it be?

Then see that shrewd Yankee who has come to spy out the land, to see what is to be made out of it. He impresses you with the fact that

there is just one country in the world, and that country is the Younited States, " and I'm telling you right now that what you want in this here country is closer trade relations with the States. It's no good putting it off; Canady will have to join the Union sooner or later, so why not do it at once? The British Empire? Why, I tell you that's all very well for sentiment—and, mind you, I'm not saying anything agen sentiment—but you're not going to live on sentiment. What you want is trade, and I'm telling you right here that you aren't going to develop your country except by the help of the Younited States. Why, it stands to reason, there is yer market, and there is yer source of supply, and if you try to prevent trade from following its natrel course by artificial tariff restrictions, why, no country ken prosper, however rich it may be, and I doamine telling you that you've got a dern fine country right here. So don't make any mistake about that. Why, I've travelled some, and I kin tell you there ain't a finer country on the North American continent than this right here; all it wants is proper administration. I'm not saying anything agen the British Government, mind you, I've a great admyration fer the British Empire, but to try to keep two countries seprat which are natrelly one, why it's not reasonable," etc., etc., etc., *ad nauseam*.

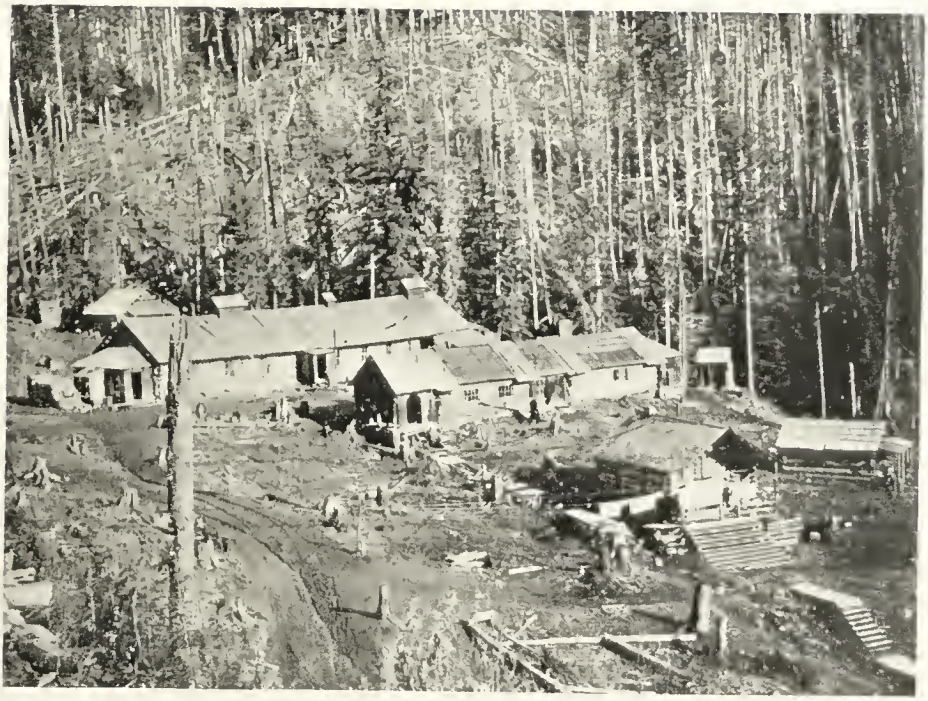
Let us turn for relief to that jolly-looking man in the tweed suit. In spite of his knickers and cap and his fair moustache, you know he is not an Englishman. He has been brought up in the West and has never been farther east than Kansas City. He is rough and ready in manner; he has had

all kinds of exciting experiences and can look after himself under any conditions. He has not got the polish of the East, but he is a gentleman all the same, there is no question about that.

He comes from Idaho, and is taking a month's holiday, shooting and fishing on Kootenay Lake. He is really a Virginian ; that is where his parents came from. His ancestors came over in the seventeenth century from somewhere back in Essex County, England, and he still feels an affection for that far away "Old Country." He likes to come now and then for business or pleasure on to Canadian soil ; he doesn't want to see the Union Jack hauled down and Old Glory raised in its place ; he wants to see the two floating side by side in an indissoluble alliance.

Now look at that grizzled old man on the far side of the deck. He is a prospector, as tough as nails although he must be well over sixty. He came from Germany forty years ago, ran away from the Army, he says. He has been all over the West, and has forgotten how to speak German, but his English is very peculiar even after all these years.

He has been out to Spokane with wonderful samples of ore from somewhere up Twelve Mile Creek, and has got a grubstake for the summer, so as to drive a tunnel to tap the vein lower down and prove the immense orebody which he knows is there. He will make several trips up there, packing powder, candles, tools and "grub" on his back, sixty or seventy pounds at a time, until he has all his supplies ready for the summer's work. Then he will remain up there alone all through



A MINE CAMP.

S.S. "KASLO" AT KASLO.

To face p. 22.

the summer, right on until the snow comes, and perhaps even after that, unless his supplies run out.

Just beyond him is a Kaslo lady returning from a day's shopping in Nelson ; then a nautical-looking man, who is managing director of one of the larger mines, going up on his monthly visit. Then a big, sturdy " fish-eater " from Nova Scotia who is shift boss in a mine somewhere in the hills round Sandon. Close by are two swarthy Italians, or " Dagoes " as they are universally called here, going to look for a job " mucking " in some of the mines. One of them has not been out long from Naples, and can speak no English, so his companion has to do all the talking.

Such are a few of the many varied types that may be seen travelling any day in this country.

* * * * *

When I was there the K. & S. Railway was running, a little narrow-gauge, one-horse show, which ran a train three times a week in summer between Kaslo and Sandon, and in winter whenever possible between snowslides. The one excitement of life was the arrival of the train : the whole population of Whitewater would gather at the depot when the distant whistle announced its approach. Then, after discussing the topics of the day with each other and with any passengers who happened to be on the train, one and all would adjourn to the store, which served the additional purpose of hotel, saloon, and post-office, there to await the distribution of the mail.

First of all the parcels and papers would be sorted out, a long and laborious process, especially if there had been no train for a week previously.

Then, when the last paper had been sorted, finally the letter bag would be opened. As many letters for men working in the mine would be addressed to unpronounceable names in strange and weird writing from somewhere in the backwoods of Europe, the sorting was rather a slow job. Soon after I went there the train ceased running into Sandon, and turned back from McGuigan, five miles above Whitewater, so that if you wanted to answer a letter in time to catch the train on its return trip, there was no time to lose. Why it was considered necessary to sort the papers first I could never imagine, but nothing would induce them to depart from that rule!

In winter the line used to be blocked by snowslides half the time. The train would be sent out from Kaslo, headed by the "rotary," to plough its way through the snow; perhaps it would get as far as Twelve Mile Creek and then have to turn back. Frequently it would not reach Whitewater for a week or ten days.

On one occasion it was struggling in a bad snowslide when the shaft of the rotary broke, and a new one had to be made in Spokane before it could be started again. There was no train up to Whitewater for three weeks on that occasion, and provisions ran short, so that the men from the mines had to be sent down to Kaslo, making their way as best they could down the railway track over the snowslides.

Walking through a couple of feet of freshly fallen snow is no picnic, but to struggle through snow which has thawed and partly packed, and then slid, forming loose masses from ten to twenty

feet deep, well, there are more amusing occupations! To sink up to your hips at every step, and sometimes deeper, is no joke, especially if you have your blankets on your back.

Where the snow is packed you can use snowshoes if you have, or can beg, borrow, or steal any, so long as it is freezing, but towards the end of the winter, when the snowslides come, it is generally thawing most of the daytime, and to attempt to use snowshoes on wet snow bears a strong resemblance to work, and very hard work too.

Of course, to go anywhere away from the railway, or a beaten road or trail, when there is six feet of snow on the ground, one must use snowshoes or skis. The latter form a delightful means of getting about where they can be used, but in a mountainous and heavily timbered country they can not be used very much.

On moonlight nights I used to put on my snowshoes and take a ramble up or down the valley, drinking in the glory of the enchanted scenery. The graceful curves of the cedar boughs with their heavy burden of snow; the dark green of the hemlocks and firs standing out sharp and clear against the pure white carpet; the fallen timber with its white covering, forming all kinds of fantastic shapes; the snow mushrooms on the big stumps; the weird shadows cast by the moonlight; the mountains with their timbered slopes and rocky bluffs, half white, half black, standing clear cut against the perfect blue of the sky; the sky itself so clear that you would think the stars were only a few miles away; the delightful, crisp,

invigorating air, and the pleasant crunch of the dry snow under your feet ; all this forms a fairylike scene never to be forgotten.

And then to think that there are people who prefer to sit in the saloon, smoking and drinking and playing poker !

A man once remarked to me that when he first came out from England he used to sit gazing at the mountains in speechless admiration, but added with a touch of pride, that he very soon got over that, and was now unmoved by the most glorious scenery. That is the case with many of the people here ; they look upon it as a sign of weakness, of sentimentality, to be affected by the glories of Nature ; they are so absorbed in the petty affairs of everyday life that they live among some of the most magnificent scenery on God's earth without looking at it. They take pride in being practical, not sentimental, in being occupied with real life, not with imagination ! But which is the real? The moon shone on the snow and on the cedars and hemlocks ten thousand years ago, but where were the mines then? What was the price of silver in New York then? The moon will shine just as brightly ten thousands years hence. Where will the mines be then? I wonder !

* * * * *

Then on a glorious summer's day, to climb to the top of one of these peaks, eight thousand feet above the sea, and look all around, seeing nothing but an ocean of mountains in every direction, as far as the eye can reach. At your feet, two thousand feet below, a beautiful grassy slope, and below that the timber. To your right the snow patch which

you crossed in coming up, and to your left a glacier scintillating in the sun. Peaks all around, many of which it would puzzle an Alpine climber to scale.

At one place you see a gap in the mountains and can, perhaps, catch a glimpse of Slocan Lake; on the other side you can trace the course of Kaslo Creek away to the east. Away below you is the little hill that looked so high from the valley; it looked as big as the surrounding mountains. Near the top you can see several specks. With your glasses you distinguish one of these as the portal of a mine tunnel with its dump, another is a cabin. There two men have been working all the summer, a Prince Edward Islander and a Cockney; last week the Cockney came down for their mail and a box of candles; he had some samples of nice ore. They are going to stay on there, right on until the middle of November, to open it up and prove the length of the orebody.

Farther off you see the cabin where the Captain lives with his dog. He has not been down since he went up there in May. Last Sunday I was up on that hill and looked in on him, taking his mail, one letter, which had been lying about for three weeks. He wanted me to take a photograph of the view up the valley from his tunnel, but the sun was in the wrong direction, so nothing would satisfy him but I must stop the night and take the view in the morning.

He was a captain in the Prussian Army once, but left for reasons which are only hinted at; something about a court-martial that he thought it wise not to wait for. Anyway, he left the

country in a hurry. But all that is many years ago, and out here nobody asks any questions. To see him now you would think that he had been born and bred a prospector in the wild and woolly West. And as for his crime, whatever that may have been, well, that is buried in the past; this is a country in which a man can make a fresh start in life, and as long as he behaves himself here, nobody is going to inquire too closely into his past. If the truth were known you would be surprised to find how many there are who could not afford to find fault with each other's antecedents! And there is not a gentler or a kinder-hearted man than the Captain in the whole country. You should have seen him last spring when his dog was ill!

At the foot of the hill you catch a glimpse of a patch of water sparkling in the sun. That is Bear Lake, and just beyond it, invisible from here, is Fish Lake, a great place for trout and an ideal spot in the long summer evenings. What could be more delightful than to walk up there about half-past five, while the sun is still on the water, take Scottie's rickety little boat out into the lake, and have a plunge into the deliciously cool water? And then to have a brisk row round the lake.

There are any amount of beaver there; one evening two of us were out in the boat, and we gave chase to one. When we got within twenty yards of him, flap went his tail with a report like a gun, and he had vanished, to reappear after several minutes two hundred yards away in the opposite direction to that in which he had been

WHITEWATER DEPOT, WINTER.

WINTER SCENERY.

To face p. 28.

swimming. Rowing after him again, this was repeated a number of times, the wily creature going in a different direction each time, for they will never by any chance go towards their "house" when there is an enemy in sight.

The lake is well stocked with trout, but sport is very variable. Sometimes you will pull out fish as fast as you can cast your fly; on other occasions you may spend hours without a bite. And it doesn't always seem to depend on the weather or the light.

We must not forget to look in on Scottie before going back; we shall probably find him digging potatoes, but he will ask us into the house to have a cup of tea. He came out from Scotland nobody knows how long ago. In the palmy days, when Bear Lake was quite a lively place, he used to keep an hotel and store. The only remaining outward and visible sign of this departed glory is the legend "Miners' Exchange" in large letters across the front of his house. Now he just carries on the "ranch," which consists of a potato field, a vegetable garden, and a poultry run, from which he supplies some of the neighbouring mines with vegetables and eggs.

Then on the way back what a feast of berries you can have! First come the salmon berries and then the raspberries; later on luscious blackcaps and genuine blackberries, sweet and juicy. Most plentiful, especially up on the mountain sides, are the delicious huckleberries and blueberries; and lastly, in the fall, come the big, juicy black currants, the most refreshing of all on a hot day.

Nature is prodigal in her supply of berries; you

can go up the mountain side to a huckleberry patch and fill as many baskets or buckets as you can carry, then boil them down with sugar, and put them up in jars for the rest of the year.

* * * * *

It is comical to see a chipmunk eating a huckleberry. It will sit on its haunches on a twig, hold the berry with its two hands and nibble at it, first one side and then the other, taking several minutes to devour a single berry, while you have to take at least half a dozen at a mouthful in order to taste them at all.

But perhaps I ought to explain what a chipmunk is; one gets so used to them here as part of the scheme of things that one forgets that there are benighted people at home who don't know what they are.

Well, it is a little animal something like a squirrel, but rather smaller, light brown or reddish, with a dark stripe down each side. It makes a peculiar chirping noise which apparently comes out of its tail, judging by the way it moves while making that sound. There are millions of them all through the forest; their chirping makes the place alive. It would otherwise be very silent, as there are no song birds.

One got into my bedroom once through the window. I managed to catch him in order to have a closer look at him, but it certainly was a job. I had to use a bath towel to capture him with, and even then his claws and teeth went through it like pins. Talk about cats! Fortunately his claws are not quite so sharp as a cat's, but they certainly do dig in!

In the fall the chipmunks lay in a store of fir cones and retire into holes in the trees where they hibernate through the winter. If they lay in their stores early, a hard winter is predicted.

There is another very common animal of the squirrel family, the ground squirrel, generally called a gopher here, although I believe that name is used for quite a different animal in California. It is about the size of a large rat, and burrows like a rabbit. You can see them alongside the trail or the railway track, wherever there is cleared ground, sitting erect on their haunches, on the look-out, absolutely still, like miniature statues. They remind one of pictures of penguins, allowing for the difference of colour.

Then there is the groundhog or whistler; you don't see these so often, but on the high ground above the timber line their shrill whistle is continually sounding. It sounds exactly like a man whistling.

Now and then you come across a porcupine, an ungainly creature, notable not only for his wonderful protection of quills, but also for his voracious appetite and omnivorous propensities. Whole boxes of candles disappear when Mr. Porky finds his way into the cabin; even "powder" does not escape him. It is a peculiar taste, but the soft, gelatinous sticks of dynamite seem to have a particular attraction for Mr. Porky.

A more disagreeable neighbour is that beautiful little striped animal, the skunk. Beware of him! He will not bite, he won't even touch you, but if you venture too near him you won't be fit to go near a human being for a fortnight.

He must be treated with respect. If he comes near your cabin or your tent, don't interfere with him ; just let him take his time. You dare not even shoot him, or the place will not be fit to live in ; you can remove the body, but the scent will remain.

There are bears, too, in this country, lots of them, although they keep out of the way of human beings pretty well. You often see and smell the places where they have been, especially about the huckleberry patches in the berry season, for they too are passionately fond of those delicious berries. The black and brown bears will always keep out of your way, and never attack unless you actually step on one while going through the bush, or possibly if they have cubs about ; so when going through long grass or thick brush, make all the noise you can.

The silver-tip or grizzly, however, is not so shy, and doesn't mind having a go at you. The usual method of procedure if a silver-tip is unexpectedly encountered at a bend in the trail, is to return the way you came, or any other way that happens to be clear, at an increased speed, in fact at the very highest speed that you are capable of. I have never had that amusing experience myself, but am told that, in spite of the bear's ungainly appearance, a man has a pretty tough job to outrun one even in the clear, and when it comes to going through thick brush the betting is distinctly in favour of Mr. Bruin. He is a pretty good hand at climbing trees too.

Cougars, or mountain lions, better known in Europe under the name of panther, should also be avoided when one is not looking for trouble.

The principal object of sport in this country is the Rocky Mountain goat, a fine animal with magnificent horns. They are met with in the mountains to the north of Kaslo Creek, but the great hunting ground is to the east of Kootenay Lake. The goat's chief amusement is to balance itself on inaccessible peaks and look round over the country. The method of stalking Mr. Goat is to manœnvre so as to get above him (if he is not already on the highest point), and roll rocks down towards him. A goat will always go upwards in the presence of danger, and you may thus get within shot.

Of course, if you should happen to kill him you must be prepared for the fact that he will fall some two thousand feet in a direction in which it is impossible for you to descend without going several miles round, but that is part of the game.

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Bird life is not very strongly represented here; now and then you see a beautiful woodpecker or a blue jay, and occasionally, in the height of summer, an exquisitely coloured little humming-bird, more like an insect than a bird.

But the most interesting birds are the grouse. During the fall there are lots of willow grouse among the timber, particularly where the huckleberries are, for these birds also, like the chipmunk and the bear, are attracted by those sweet little berries. I may mention in passing that the term huckleberry is applied to a variety of blueberry (*anglice* whortleberry), darker and of a more purple colour than the regular blueberry, and much sweeter and more juicy, but I have heard the name

used on Vancouver Island for a bright scarlet berry, and have not been able to discover which is correct.

The willow grouse is a very easy bird to shoot, and makes excellent eating. Nobody shoots for "sport"; I don't believe there is a shot-gun in the country. The regulation way is to take a "twenty-two" rifle and get as near the bird as you can. If he is running, then, like the foreign prince once pictured in *Punch*, you wait till he stops and then take a shot at him. If you are a crack shot you shoot off his head, otherwise you let fly at him anywhere, and trust to luck.

The blue grouse is a much more gamey bird, keeping higher up. While his cousin is down among the huckleberries he is to be found above the timber line, and is pretty hard to stalk.

Prospectors and miners who dwell up in the mountains always take a twenty-two, and eke out their grub supply by the welcome addition of a grouse, familiarly known as a chicken, now and then.

* * * * *

For a year I was "batching," that is to say, doing all my own cooking, in addition to performing the duties of housemaid. All my previous knowledge of cooking consisted in boiling eggs and making tea, but in the West some knowledge of the culinary art is essential; you are liable to be thrown on your own resources at any time, and how utterly helpless a man is who cannot even cook his own meals! And it was an interesting experience.

Bread could usually be obtained from the store,

but I wanted to learn that part of the game also, and made my own for the first six months, until I became proficient, that is to say, until I became fairly certain that an eatable product would result from my efforts.

Some of my first efforts were truly weird; it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that when I had visitors, sometimes they asked for bread and I gave them a stone! However, when the bread was not quite what it ought to have been, there was always the miner's regular stand-by to fall back upon, namely baking-powder biscuits. These have no resemblance to biscuits as known in the Old Country, being more of the nature of hot rolls.

There is a certain kind of biscuit, known I believe in the Old Country as water crackers, of which there is always a supply on the table. These are known here simply as crackers, and when a cheechahko, fresh from the Old Land, is asked to pass the biscuits, he naturally seizes these, a mistake which is absolutely incomprehensible to the Canadians.

My cakes were highly successful; I used to make all kinds of combinations with excellent results. On one occasion when there were some visitors coming, while attending to something else I forgot the cakes, like King Alfred, until they were badly burnt on top. But a brilliant idea occurred to me: there happened to be some icing sugar on hand, so I seized the cook-book and looked up the formula for icing, hurriedly scraped the burnt portion off the cakes, and iced them all, with the result that my proficiency in cake-making was highly eulogized, and ever afterwards icing was a familiar

feature in my cakes, even when they were not burnt!

One summer there was a party of the Geological Survey in camp close by for six weeks, and that was great company. Many a jolly evening was spent either in their camp or at my place, regaled by stirring tales of Hudson's Bay or the Yukon, the wilds of Northern Ontario or of British Columbia, hairbreadth escapes from bears, pleasing interviews with skunks, perilous canoe trips over rapids, and all kinds of exciting adventures. For work on the Geological Survey of Canada is not child's play by any means.

Generally, when visitors came to dinner they would find me in my shirt-sleeves peeling the potatoes, and all would take their coats off and lend a hand to get the dinner ready; there was no formality about it! And after dinner all would set to with the washing up.

The few women in such a place always take pity on the poor bachelors; many a little delicacy have I had from my Swedish neighbours, a miner and his wife, with three dear little girls who rejoice in jaw-breaking polysyllabic names. Then there were the mine foreman, an Ohio man, and his charming Lancashire wife, my particular friends. Many and many a happy evening have I spent with them; and as for their little children, why, white-headed Joe was the real boss of the camp; there was not a man in the place but was devoted to him. And his little sister is coming on apace too; she will be a militant suffragette before long!

But the greatest help I had in my culinary efforts was from Hard Ground Henry. He is a well-known

WHITEWATER GLACIER.

To face p. 36.

character throughout the Slocan. Short and not at all stout, but deep chested and as strong as a bull, he will do a day's work against any man in the country, and, whether he is working for himself or for wages, he will do a good honest day's work. Obstinate as Mephistopheles, he will argue all night on any earthly subject, but he will never lose his temper. When little more than a boy, he left his home back in Ontario and has since been all over the West; Montana, Idaho, Oregon, California, back in New Ontario, West again to Washington, and now British Columbia. And he has seen some pretty tough places in his time, and been up against all kinds of hard characters, but beneath all his roughness he has all the instincts of a gentleman, and if any one wants help, Hard Ground Henry will be the first not merely to offer help, but to go right in and begin helping.

When he was not working up in the mountains we frequently visited each other, and had many long talks on all sorts of subjects, for Hard Ground Henry is not only a philosopher but has also an extensive knowledge of literature, being an omnivorous reader.

He it was who helped me with my cooking; he taught me how to make baking-powder biscuits; he told me not to take any notice of Mrs. Beeton's nine eggs for a cake, but to use four to a pound of flour for a standard cake basis, which could be varied in an infinite number of ways; he showed me how to prepare the fiddle-head fern so as to make greens as delicate as spinach; he instructed me in the proper way of preparing and frying trout (for that was before I became a

vegetarian); he taught me how to make sourdough, from which excellent bread can be made without either baking-powder or yeast, a regular prospector's stunt; he showed me how to make hot cakes, that typically American dainty, which I understand originally came from Yorkshire; he taught me the names and uses of many weird kitchen implements, and showed me the correct procedure in washing up. In short, if it hadn't been for Hard Ground Henry, my "batching" would never have been the success that it was.

* * * * *

But my principal pal during the last year was the Assayer, a McGill man, and a thorough Canadian, having been born on Vancouver Island, of an Irish-American father and a Welsh mother.

With an inexhaustible fund of songs and jokes, and an equally inexhaustible supply of good spirits, he brings cheer and sunshine wherever he goes. He used to come down to my place regularly two or three evenings a week, summer or winter, generally accompanied by the Shift-boss, a big Nova Scotian "Fish-eater," as the inhabitants of that maritime province are called, six feet tall and then some, and broad in proportion, and we would sit down to a game of slough. It is a fine game, as good as bridge, but I have never met any one who knew it except in the West. It is sometimes called solo, but is quite a different game from the solo in Hoyle. The Shift-boss was the expert, the Assayer and I the learners. When we got tired of slough we would play freeze-out or whisky poker. Sometimes two or three others would come in, and we would have an exciting game of poker, but only for

chips—money never entered into our games; there was plenty of gambling elsewhere for those who wanted it.

Then when it was over they would make their way up the hill again. Unless there was a moon, each man would carry a "bug." It sounds rather startling at first, but it is a universal practice, and merely refers to a lantern made out of a lard pail or other suitable tin, carried in a horizontal position, with a candle stuck through the lower side. They make very good lamps, and can stand a pretty strong wind, but your candle must be long enough to last as long as you are going to be out, and a good tight fit; if it falls out on a dark night you are "up against it."

When the snow is on the ground it is easier to see where you are going in a general way, but a trail in the snow is very difficult to see at night even if it is sunk two feet below the level of the surrounding snow; and if you lose the candle out of your bug, and have not taken the precaution to bring a spare one, you may flounder up to your waist in snow without seeing the trail close beside you; it all looks so much alike, and the shadows are so very deceiving.

The snow on the trails becomes pressed down hard, and by the time the surrounding snow is five or six feet deep on the ground, the trails are generally sunk to a depth of two or three feet below the general surface. Towards the end of the winter, when the snow is going away, the hard snow on the trails is the last to melt, and these are left standing up as ridges. It then becomes a question of balancing oneself on the trail, with

frequent slips into a foot or two of wet, slushy snow.

That is the worst part of the winter; as long as the snow is dry it is all right, but when it becomes slushy it is horrible. Leather boots are no use at all; ordinary rubbers are no good in deep snow; gum boots are heavy and cumbersome, and the only satisfactory way to keep one's feet dry is to wear "arctics"—contrivances of felt worn over ordinary boots—and even these are not proof against the wet snow for very long, although excellent in dry snow.

For a short period in the fall, after the snow has come to stay but before it is deep enough for sleighing, wagon traffic has to be suspended and sleigh traffic cannot be commenced. There is a corresponding period in the spring when the snow is disappearing. During these two periods those supplies which it is absolutely necessary to take up to the mines have to be transported by pack mules. Each mule will carry two hundred pounds, but this is rather a slow process compared to wagons or sleighs, and when these periods are approaching a good stock of everything is laid in, so that as little as possible will have to be taken up in this way.

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Besides the discomfort and inconvenience arising from the wet snow, it is during the spring, from March until May, when the snowslides occur, blocking up roads and railways, with their inevitable toll of casualties.

The railways are protected by snow sheds at the worst points where snowslides occur regularly,

but sometimes they come in unexpected places. On the main line of the C.P.R., which is well protected in this way, there was a fearful accident a few years ago. A gang of men, about thirty of them, were shovelling snow off the line near Roger's Pass, when a second slide came in the same place and buried them all. In the Cascades, in the State of Washington, a Great Northern train was caught in a tunnel, both ends being blocked by slides, and a number of people were suffocated by the smoke before they could dig a passage out. Since then that section of the line has been electrified to avoid the possibility of such a catastrophe happening again.

This is the worst feature of the winter in mountainous districts, not the cold. As long as there is no wind—and there seldom is any to speak of in this part of the country—you feel the cold very little. I have felt it less at twenty below zero than in England at a few degrees below freezing point.

* * * * *

It takes something to keep a house warm in the winter, though. A good log cabin keeps in the heat, but a frame building, unless it is very well constructed, with tar paper between the boards, although more pretentious, is not nearly so serviceable in the cold weather.

I had to keep a large Queen Heater going night and day for nearly four months, and a smaller one in another room for over two months, and by day only for much longer still. It took a good half-hour every day chopping wood for these and the cook-stove.

Of course, the stove-pipes had to be cleaned out periodically, for they soon get choked up with soot, and sometimes they will "sweat," that is to say, that tarry matter distilled from the wood collects in the horizontal portions of the pipes and leaks at the joints, making no end of a mess in the room! I used to fill the stoves as full as they could be packed with green wood every night before going to bed, and close off the air so that the wood smouldered all night, keeping the room nice and warm, but this process caused an awful lot of sweating in the pipes!

Sometimes in the middle of the night I would hear the water boiling in the heater, and on going into the big room would find the top of the stove red-hot, the air supply not having been completely closed off. On those occasions Tige would become very uneasy, but it never seemed to occur to him to come into my bedroom and attract my attention. He was a mongrel fox-terrier, my constant companion on all my rambles and the best of company, but he came from a family in which there was a predilection for fits, and one hot day the poor little fellow was carried off by one.

In order to clean the pipes the stove had to be damped down, the pipes disconnected, and each length scraped out. That was all right, but then they had to be put together again. The pipe from the smaller stove had three elbows and passed through two partition walls. Only one whose bad karma has placed him in a similar position can realize what it means to put that together again single-handed. A parson once declared that swearing was a deadly sin on all other occasions,

THE MILL, WHITEWATER MINE.

PACK MULES.

To face p. 42.

but that when putting up stove-pipes a free dispensation was granted to swear *ad lib.*!

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And the water-pipes! Never shall I forget the times I have had with frozen pipes; the hours I have spent crawling about in the space under the house, locating frozen or burst pipes, replacing them, and covering them over with sawdust or manure, very often only to have to take the same pipe out again a day or two afterwards, and doing all these operations doubled up in all kinds of fancy positions by the light of a candle dimly burning!

The water was laid on from a spring a quarter of a mile away on the other side of the river. The supply pipe froze on me twice; on one occasion I was three weeks without water. I had two men working on the pipeline most of the time, and finally, with the aid of a liberal use of coal-oil and waste, and a vast amount of perseverance, we got the water to run again.

Then the waste-pipes would freeze and have to be dug out and thawed. If a tap was not left slightly open day and night during a cold snap it would freeze, and probably a pipe would burst, so that when a waste-pipe froze it was necessary to put a hose on to the corresponding tap to carry off the water while the waste-pipe was being thawed out. Sometimes, if a waste-pipe was only slightly frozen it could be caught in time by pouring hot water down it, but it frequently meant a trip under the house, and very likely also digging through six feet of snow and nine inches of earth outside, and laying the pipe bare in order to apply coal-oil and waste.

Those water-pipes certainly were the joy of my life during the winter! The first indication of a frozen supply would be the water boiling in the heater. When that ominous sound occurred there would be an anxious moment until one of the taps was tried, so as to ascertain whether the main supply-pipe was frozen or only the one supplying the heater.

Another source of trouble was the snow on the roofs. But this could always be kept in hand; it was not a constant source of anxiety like the water-pipes. If allowed to accumulate too much the weight of the snow would break a roof in, but a periodical shovelling prevents such a mishap from occurring.

Sometimes, however, after a heavy fall of snow, the shovelling has to be done in a hurry, and I have several times had to pitch in and do it myself in order to relieve the pressure on the roof. Freshly fallen snow is light and flaky, and is very unsatisfactory to deal with; it is like trying to shovel feathers. Packed snow, when dry, is easy to handle; you can get a decent load at each shovelful. But wet snow, well, it would be hard to imagine a more heartbreaking job than shovelling wet snow. You dig your shovel in, and with an effort detach a chunk of snow, laboriously raise it up, and heave. But instead of the snow sliding freely off your shovel, it clings to it, and your shovel falls down still bearing its load of snow! Then you have to scrape it off laboriously. It is indeed miserable work.

The heat of the house causes the layer of snow next the roof to thaw, trickling down to the eaves,

where it becomes frozen into a fringe of ice extending along the whole length of the roof, and from which icicles descend at intervals. To break off this ice fringe needs an axe, and the shingles of the roof are liable to get damaged in the process. The windows are also liable to get damaged by the falling icicles unless one is careful.

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Perhaps the greatest bugbear of the Slocan, in common with most densely timbered countries, is one not connected with the winter, but with the summer, namely the fear of forest fires. When a fire is once started it is practically impossible to check it. If there is a wind it will spread with inconceivable rapidity, and sweep away everything in its course, leaping across rivers and clearings which one would have thought would stop the progress of any fire. The British Columbian Government is doing everything possible to prevent the occurrence of forest fires, and to cope with them when once started, when that is at all possible, by having the country patrolled by fire wardens, whose duty it is, among other things, to nip in the bud any fire started.

In spite of all precautions, however, after a dry summer forest fires occur all over the country, and the smoke renders the atmosphere hazy for hundreds of miles. The most frequent cause of fires is undoubtedly the carelessness of some people in neglecting to extinguish their camp fires when leaving. Such a fire, smouldering, will creep along among the grass and brush, attacking the roots of trees, which are followed until the trunks themselves are reached. Then, if the tree is a cedar, the

silently smouldering fire will burst into flame and leap up the dry bark in a moment, setting fire to the branches. Other trees are attacked more slowly, but none the less surely.

After hours of labour one may succeed in smothering the visible fire if it is tackled early enough, but the roots may go on smouldering for days, and the fire break out in another place after it had been believed to be extinguished.

Few scenes more desolate can be imagined than a tract of country after a forest fire. Miles and miles of hillside covered with gaunt grey stubs, partly charred, looking like the bristles of some gigantic brush. And the ground between one continuous network of fallen logs, rendering progress a matter of great difficulty. The place may remain in this condition for many years before a new growth appears.

But everywhere in the track of a fire, almost before the fire is out, there springs up the fireweed with its pretty purple blossoms, pretty while the flower lasts, but a most infernal nuisance afterwards, as the downy seed is so thick that in walking through a patch of fireweed it is raised in a cloud, floating about everywhere and sticking to all your clothes. It spreads all over the place, and grows so quickly that trails get completely blocked up by it in no time.

The Slocan has had its share of fires; the greater part of the north side of the valley of Kaslo Creek is bare of living trees. The south side, getting less sun, does not get so dried up and has fared better.

The summer of 1910 was exceptionally dry, and

forest fires raged throughout the North-West. One of these occurred in this valley and wiped several mining camps off the face of the earth, but fortunately with only a very small toll of casualties. Houses, mine structures, mills,[1] railway bridges, and everything made of wood vanished completely. At the time I was away up in the Lillooet country, and when I got back to civilization the first thing I learnt was that my late home had all gone up in smoke, and that there was nothing to go back to!

It transpired later that through the kind offices of friends, nearly all my property had been collected and sent off on the last train, on which the inhabitants had saved themselves and their movable goods before the fire reached the place.

So ended my sojourn in the Slocan.

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[1] Ore-dressing establishments.

CHAPTER II

THE LILLOOET COUNTRY

Lillooet is one of the oldest towns in British Columbia, having been an old place long before Vancouver was ever thought of. In the old days it was an important place, being on the great Cariboo Road, but with the construction of the C.P.R. the channels of traffic were completely altered; Lillooet was side-tracked, and has remained a sleepy little village ever since.

The famous Cariboo Road was built by a party of Royal Engineers in the fifties, in the days of the great gold rush, when British Columbia, then called New Caledonia, was still a Crown Colony. A branch road from Ashcroft, on the C.P.R., joins the Cariboo Road at Clinton, cutting Lillooet out altogether, and Ashcroft is now the jumping-off place, but a reminder of the old order of things exists in the naming of the road-houses, which are designated by their distance in miles from Lillooet, as 150 Mile House, and so forth.

The little town is on the right bank of the Fraser, forty-two miles above Lytton, the nearest railway station, from which it is reached by stage.

The journey from Vancouver to Lytton is profoundly interesting, for wherever one may travel in B.C., it is impossible to get away from beautiful scenery of one kind or another.

Leaving Vancouver in the morning, one travels for three hours up the lower Fraser Valley, that rich farming country immediately tributary to Vancouver. At midday Hope is reached; one sees no village, only a little station, and wonders what it was put there for. But the town, such as it is, is down on the flat ground among the trees, three-quarters of a mile away on the other side of the river, and in the old days Hope was one of the most important points in British Columbia, being the head of navigation on the lower reaches of the Fraser.

Long before Vancouver appeared on the face of the map, men came up the river from New Westminster to Hope, there to start off on the four hundred mile tramp up into the great Cariboo country.

Hope was then a town of considerable importance, and many tales are told of the wild happenings in those days.

The Cariboo Road extended all the way from New Westminster, past Hope, thence through the Fraser River Cañon to Lytton and on to Lillooet, where it left the river for a time, passing over the high ground to the east, back again to the river at Soda Creek, where it is once more navigable, and so on to Quesnel, and thence up to Barkerville, the metropolis of the Cariboo. Its history would afford stirring reading, but that is another story.

Since the construction of the C.P.R. that portion passing through the cañon, between Hope and Lytton, has been abandoned, and one sees relics of it here and there from the train on the far side of the cañon, a streak along the face of an almost

perpendicular cliff, a flimsy looking bridge across a gully, half-destroyed by time, a bit of cribbing to support the road along the side of a precipice; it looks scarcely possible for any one to have travelled over such a road, and reached the end of the journey alive!

We are passing through the Coast Range now; the Fraser has cut a deep cañon through this range of mountains, so narrow and steep as to present a hard problem to road and railway engineers. At one point the river cannot be fifty feet wide; it hardly seems conceivable that this is the same mighty river which flows in solemn majesty past New Westminster seventy miles below, or the same which flows calmly, three hundred yards wide, past Fort George, three hundred and fifty miles above. It surely must be very deep here, and the current is obviously strong: the water is simply boiling, in seething whirlpools, among the rocks.

It is a glorious sight, this cañon; each bend of the line brings some fresh beauty into view. At one point we cross to the other side, and can look right down over the side of the trestle bridge into the foaming torrent below. The grotesquely shaped rocks, the boiling rapids, the eddies and whirlpools, the falls with incessantly flying spray, the deep pools, no one knows how deep. Imagine the fate of a canoe in such waters!

And yet there are people who will sleep, or read the paper, or play cards, without so much as a glance out of the window!

There scarcely seems room for one railway through this cañon, and yet another is being built; the Canadian Northern Pacific will soon be running

THE FRASER AT HOPE.

CROSSING A ROCKSLIDE.

ON THE TRAIL.

To face p. 50.

trains along the opposite side.[1] And where the C.P.R. crosses over to the left bank, the C.N.P. has to cross to the right, for there is certainly not room for two on one side. One admires the ingenuity and perseverance, and marvels at the difficulties overcome by the engineers and construction gangs of the C.N.P. in their perilous task. But, hard as it is, they have an immense advantage which their predecessors on the C.P.R. never had. They have an existing railway close at hand, so that they can travel in comfort, and deliver supplies at points all along this section of the route. When the C.P.R. was under construction they had no such facilities, being hundreds of miles from their base of supplies.

How little one realizes this when sitting in a comfortable observation car. How many lives have been sacrificed in order that we might travel in comfort and see this magnificent scenery without exertion! Let us give a thought in passing to those brave pioneers who toiled amid such dangers and hardships.

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Leaving Lytton on the stage early in the morning, the Thompson River is crossed by a substantial timber bridge, and the road follows the left bank of the Fraser. In places the hillside is almost precipitous, and on rounding a sharp bend one offers up a silent prayer that the stage may not overturn and land us in the river five hundred feet below, for the driver takes a fiendish delight in dashing along at a breakneck speed, much to the discomfiture of the poor passengers.

[1] This line was opened for trans-continental traffic in November 1915.

Then we come to a gully; a wild career down to the right, an appallingly sharp bend over the narrow bridge, and up on the other side, gaining as much height as possible before the horses are compelled to break into a walk, panting and streaming with perspiration.

The road is dusty, and it is as well to wear your very oldest clothes for such a trip, or else to put on your "digging clothes" before you leave Lytton. If you wear a good suit it will be ruined, for the dust gets into everything and will not come out.

In the valley below we see beautiful flats, some cultivated, but mostly untouched. This is a dry country, and needs irrigation, but surely the flow of the river could be made use of to raise water to irrigate the rich soil of the valley lands.

Half-way we stop at a ranch to change teams and have our midday meal. The country is more open here, the valley being wide, and we see an example of what can be done with the soil. Hay in profusion, and vegetables, such vegetables! At table we get delicious new-laid eggs, and potatoes, carrots, turnips, peas, greens. I don't know how many different kinds of vegetables, all fresh and juicy, such a change after city fare and canned vegetables. And this is followed by fresh fruit and cream, real thick, sweet cream, that has never seen a can. What would one not give for such a meal in Vancouver!

But we must move on, for the fresh team is hitched up and the driver is waiting. We pass more ranches, and there are people travelling on the road; at one ranch a woman gets on and rides four miles to visit a neighbour. The sun is hot

and the dust very thick, and the jolting is rather a trial, but it is a glorious trip for all that.

The afternoon wears on, and presently we see a broad green flat extending for a mile or so on the other side of the river, and on it a cluster of houses. We go right past it; the cluster of houses develops into a little village of one long street with a church at the end. It is Lillooet, but we have to go another mile to the bridge, and then we turn back and dash up in fine style into the village.

A long, wide, sandy street with broad sidewalks, and people sitting about on the edge of the sidewalk or on chairs in front of the two hotels; nobody seems to have anything to do but to sit in the shadiest place he can find and smoke.

The country is green all round where it is under cultivation, for, when it is irrigated, this Fraser Valley soil is most fertile. They grow three crops of hay here, and fruit and vegetables galore. But it is too far from the railway, and nothing can be sent to market. They are waiting, however, for there is soon to be a railway built from North Vancouver up through the rich Pemberton Meadows past here, and on up the Fraser Valley to Fort George.[1] When that is built Lillooet will come into its own.

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I have to go a hundred and fifty miles to the north-west among the mountains, and have to arrange for a pack-train. Mr. Falconer, the prospector who is to accompany me, arranges with a breed, Schwartz, a famous hunting guide, to conduct the party. We need four horses for the

[1] Now called Prince George.

dunnage and provisions, the former including a portable canvas boat, for we are going on a lake on which no white man has yet been. With a horse apiece for us, and one for Tommy, the little Indian boy whom Schwartz brings to help with the horses, that makes eight. He has another mare, and, although she is not required, she comes along too, not wanting to be left behind, and so the cavalcade starts off, three men and a boy with nine horses.

We follow the trail out to the confluence of the Bridge River with the Fraser, and follow the former up as far as the mouth of the North Fork. We only make about twenty miles a day, making no midday halt, and stopping between three and four o'clock, when we unpack the horses and turn them out to graze, hobbling them if there is any likelihood of their straying far to seek better pasture.

To ride a packhorse is not a pleasant experience at first; on the first day out I was most uncomfortable and got very sore, but that was because I was trying to use my knees in the usual way. I soon learned that the only way to accommodate oneself to their peculiar jog-trot is the cowboy seat, namely, to put your whole weight in the stirrups and just bump, keeping your knees quite clear of the saddle. It is a peculiar sensation at first, but soon becomes quite comfortable.

The loading of a packhorse is an art only to be acquired after long years of practice. To arrange the bundles so that they will not come undone and will lie comfortably on the horse, to balance the weight equally on both sides, not too high and not too low, and finally to fasten the pack in place

by means of that fearful and wonderful work of art, the diamond hitch ; well, one lifetime is hardly enough to become a proficient packer !

On the higher ground, away from the Fraser, we get into the bull pine country, still dry, with only a little dried-up bunch grass in patches, but dotted with elegant bull-pines, whose bright orange-coloured bark in lozenge-shaped slabs, edged with dark brown, and spreading, irregular branches with large tufts of dark green needles, give them a very picturesque appearance.

Now and again in the narrow Bridge River valley the trail crosses a rock-slide. We have to go over it warily, one at a time, lest a careless step should start a slide and land us in the bottom of the valley, two hundred feet below. But these Indian horses, or "cayooses," are very sure-footed, and no such mishap occurs.

Farther on we get down into a well timbered valley with luxuriant undergrowth. We can snatch delicious blue charkom berries from the tall bushes in passing, or break off a bunch of scarlet hooshum berries, a fruit with a peculiar, insipid, slightly acid taste, but refreshing, and said to be very healthy.

There are a few pioneer ranchers up here ; they generally have a considerable amount of clearing to do, but the ground is very rich when it is cleared.

The trail is steep in places, especially where there are side gullies to cross, and we often have to get off and lead the horses. The packhorses sometimes get their packs jammed in between branches, and in their efforts to free themselves they very often disarrange their packs to such an extent that

they have to be undone and tied up afresh, entailing considerable loss of time.

Then we get out into more open country. One afternoon we camp in a beautiful green meadow near the North Fork, which has dwindled to a small creek. It is an ideal spot, but for one thing—the mosquitoes are something fierce, and we cannot remove the veil of mosquito netting from our hats for a moment. At night we have to place our hats over our heads so that the mosquito veil protects us as much as possible, but the little brutes get inside, and our faces suffer. We are not using the tents as the weather is fine.

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Then we leave the North Fork and climb up on to the divide. We soon get past the timber line, but there is grass right up to the top; the altitude is only some seven thousand feet. There are some rugged peaks, surrounded by rocky bluffs and steep precipices, an ideal country for Rocky Mountain sheep and goats, and sure enough the eagle eye of Schwartz already discerns something in the distance. The field-glasses reveal the fact that it is a large flock of magnificent sheep, for the mountain sheep is a very different creature from the familiar domesticated animal. There must be over a hundred in the flock, but there is no chance to get near them; they are much too wide awake, and in any case we have not come to hunt, so we leave them unmolested and continue our way.

This is a great hunting country; parties come here from all over North America, and from England too, for the sake of these sheep and goats. Schwartz is one of the most expert of the hunting

IN A GULLY.

CROSSING A GLACIER.

THE DESCENT ON THE OTHER SIDE

To face p. 56.

guides, and what he doesn't know about the game in the country is hardly worth knowing.

There is no trail here; the country is all open, and Schwartz knows his way among the mountains. We can make good time here. But one of the packhorses puts his foot into a gopher hole and comes down. He has cut a small vein, and the blood spurts out from above the fetlock, but fortunately no bone is broken. His leg is bandaged and we proceed. He limps for several days, and has to be lightly loaded, but is soon well again. These gopher holes are very dangerous, and it is a wonder that he didn't break his leg.

In this open country the horses are liable to scatter, and some one has to be riding round to head them off continually. Another brings up the rear, urging on the laggards, for some of the horses are lazy and will not go any faster than they have to. The process necessitates the exercise of considerable lung power, and it is absolutely essential to use the most foul and blasphemous language—at least, so I was told. Half apologizing for the choice expressions used, I was told that the horses would not take the least notice unless the language used was of that particular quality; it was not the tone of voice that mattered, but the actual words used!

The air is simply glorious up on these mountains; while it is oppressively hot down below, it is delightfully cool up here, and there is generally a little breeze, sometimes too much. We get magnificent views of valleys winding away for miles and miles, a meandering silver streak indicating the course of a river away below us.

On the higher peaks there is a good bit of snow. Among the distant mountains we see many glaciers.

Then we descend once more into a valley, and follow it up for five miles. In a thick coppice Schwartz shoots a young deer, which he speedily cleans out, and straps across the pack of one of the horses.

Passing over another divide we follow the course of a small rivulet until it develops into a respectable little creek, rushing joyously and noisily down through a deep valley carpeted with soft grass and dotted with spruce and fir. Presently a beautiful lake opens out before our view, and another beyond in the distance. We camp near the lake. There is good horse feed here; that is the principal consideration in choosing a camping ground. There are good fish in the lake too, that is another consideration. It is an idyllic spot—if it wasn't for the d——d mosquitoes!

Following down the creek, we come into the large valley of Tyaughton Creek (pronounced Tyaxen), and follow it up to its head, crossing and recrossing the creek repeatedly, for the valley bottom is rough and thickly timbered in places. Then we pass up beyond the timber, in a grassy, rock-strewn valley, to the head of the creek. The high ground is teeming with groundhogs, or whistlers; one would imagine that men were whistling all around. Tommy shoots one with his twenty-two rifle, and carries it along in triumph. In the pass there is lots of snow; it is quite refreshing in the hot sun.

On the divide we pause; a short valley, three or four miles long, lies before us, leading into the

great valley of Big Creek, which stretches away to the north-west as far as the eye can reach, the river being discernible, a tiny silver thread, following its sinuous course, away into the distance.

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We have another divide to cross before camping to-night, a glacier this time, so we press on down into the valley of Big Creek, in this part of which there is not much timber, the ground being mossy, tending to muskeg. After following up this valley a couple of miles, we turn up a branch valley on the other side. In the distance we see the glacier ahead of us: it looks very inviting in the July heat.

We are on the glacier now; the surface is formed by packed snow, and we don't see the ice at all, so there are none of those clefts which usually make the crossing of a glacier such a difficult and risky undertaking. Here it is all plain sailing, and we rise to the top of the pass without difficulty. The aneroid shows the elevation to be 8,600 feet.

Looking down in front the scene is one to pause over. Stretching away ahead of us is a long valley, green, brilliant in the sunshine, strewn with light grey boulders. Patches of snow for the first couple of miles; a few hardy bushes; and away down in the distance, the timber. On either side rugged peaks rising sheer a thousand feet and more above the valley, projecting bluffs alternating with precipitous watercourses and huge rock-slides. Snow wherever the slope is not too steep for it to lie. In the distance ahead of us a sea of peaks; far away to the south-west a giant peak towers high above the rest, its summit enveloped in a cloud.

It must be at least fifteen thousand feet high. Surely it is Mount Tatlow.

Then we descend some six miles, until we are well among the timber, and camp at the edge of a little meadow, alongside a babbling brook. Here we intend to remain for a few days, so we pitch the tents, one for Falconer and me, the other for Schwartz and Tommy. The mowitch (i.e. deer) skin is hung up to dry out, and Tommy stretches the skin of his groundhog on a piece of split cedar, and the carcass he sets on a pointed stick before the fire to roast, but he is so much chaffed about it that, after treasuring it for days, he finally throws it away uneaten. I should not imagine that it would be a very tasty dish, although I have heard of prospectors eating them. The flesh is very strong.

* * * * *

This is a beautiful country we are in; the vegetation is luxuriant in the valleys. It is sometimes said that there are no wild-flowers in British Columbia, but whoever says so has certainly not seen this country; he may have seen the vicinity of Vancouver, and not observed it very closely, but he can certainly never have been in the Lillooet district, or he would have a very different tale to tell.

For here, up among the mountains, every meadow is thick with flowers of all descriptions, large ox-eye daisies of all shades from pure white to deep purple, single and double, of a dozen different kinds; yellow flowers of the ranunculus and buttercup families in millions—large, small, long-stemmed, short-stemmed, single and in clusters; here and there a gorgeous tiger-lily, small in comparison to our cultivated variety, but of exquisite

colouring. Then the nightshade, so deadly yet so beautiful. And in each zone of altitude you find different flowers; in the forest glades are great patches of deep blue, identical to look at with patches of wild hyacinths in English woods, but on closer examination they are found not to be hyacinths, but lupins. These grow in profusion both in the woods and in the open meadows, of all shades of blue, from delicate sky blue to the deep tint of the hyacinth, some a rich violet colour, a few pure white, many speckled blue and white; occasionally one is seen of a delicate pink shade.

Then there are flowers in the damp places, in the dry places, among the rocks, on the exposed hillsides, deep hidden in the long grass; everywhere one comes across new varieties. Delicate, semi-transparent white anemones, exquisite little white and pink wax-like flowers on the ground, large clusters of fragrant cream-coloured blossoms on long stalks. And in the very passes themselves, almost on the edge of the snow, one of the most beautiful of flowers scattered by Nature with lavish hand, that fascinating little waxy blossom so much sought after in the Alps, the edelweiss, white, pale blue, pale pink, growing so thick that one is forced to tread the delicate little blossoms underfoot. In the hay meadows pea-vines, blue and purple, so eagerly sought by the horses. And on the grassy slopes a profusion of bright yellow narcissus-like flowers, and other larger, equally pretty, lilac-coloured ones. These two are not merely ornamental, they are useful, for one is the scammitch or wild potato, and the other the wild onion. Both these are very small, and it takes a lot to make a

mouthful, but Tommy diligently collects them and we have many a succulent dish.

The potatoes are barely as large as small cherries, but they are said to be the original from which the familiar tuber has been developed. The onions are still smaller. Both have to be drawn up most carefully, as the stems are very brittle; you want something to dig with—a prospecting pick comes in handy.

Falconer does the cooking; and he teaches me how to make a bannock, that substitute for bread indispensable to every prospector. The dough is mixed in the mouth of the flour sack itself; then, when thoroughly kneaded, it is put in a well-greased frying-pan, which is stood up by means of a stick, facing the fire, until one side is browned. Then comes the part where the true artist displays his skill and the novice his awkwardness; the bannock has to be turned over by tossing it like a pancake, and it takes a lot of practice to give just the right kind of jerk to the frying-pan. It is not by any means so easy as it looks, and if one is not very careful the half-baked bannock is liable to land on the ground!

The resulting bread, when well made, is delicious, but baking-powder bread is heavy at the best and it is always a relief to get back to yeast bread again after a trip in the bush. The baking-powder itself, too, is injurious in the long run, and a man cannot live on it for very long without getting his internal arrangements knocked up.

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From this camp we make several excursions to examine the country, and then proceed farther

IN CAMP.

THE CANVAS BOAT.

BY THE LAKE SHORE

To face p. 62.

down. On a mountain ahead we have amused ourselves in the evenings tracing fantastic shapes in the snow patches, one resembling a camel, another a horse's head, another a priest with a girl kneeling before him, another a rooster, and so on, so we christen it Picture Mountain, and our next camp is in the valley at its foot. We are now in Schwartz's special hunting ground; he tells us that there have not been more than a dozen white people in this part of the country before us, and of these, two have been ladies! Falconer has been here several times, but he does not know the country like Schwartz does. It is a great hunting district for the Chilcotin Indians who live farther to the north, but come here in the summer to hunt and collect roots.

Then we proceed down to Whitewater Lakes, two long, narrow sheets of water connected by a channel half a mile long and only some two hundred yards wide. Neither lake is more than two or three miles wide at any point; each is about twenty miles long. At the far end of the upper one we see a glacier, the water from which is thick and milky, hence the name Whitewater.[1] If the water had only been clear and blue it would have been an ideal place for a summer resort, but the cloudy water greatly detracts from its charm.

These lakes have never yet been shown on a map, this being one of the many blank areas on the map of British Columbia, with only a river vaguely sketched in. It will be my privilege on returning to the outside world to turn in my notes

[1] A common name in British Columbia. This has of course no connection with the Whitewater referred to in Chapter I.

to be placed on record. It is only great people like Lloyd George and Mrs. Pankhurst who can make history, but some of us lesser fry can at times help to make geography!

A trail used by the Indians crosses the narrow channel between the two lakes, and there is a dug-out moored to the bank. But we are independent of it, having our canvas boat.

This is accordingly carefully unpacked, and after reading the instructions through several times we start to put it together. After a number of unsuccessful attempts it is finally fixed up correctly and launched, and we proceed to ferry our dunnage across to the far side. Falconer and I are the first white men to navigate the waters of Whitewater Lake.

The horses have to be swum across, and that is no easy job. They have to be chased into the water with sticks and stones and a lot of shouting, and even after they are in they are disinclined to strike out into deep water, but wade along parallel to the shore and scramble up the bank two hundred yards away. Then we have to head them off, and get them in again. It is a good two hours before we finally manage to get them to the other side.

But once there they are safe, as there is a piece of good grazing in the immediate neighbourhood surrounded by dense timber, so that they cannot easily stray. That is why we came over to this side. Our camping ground is most picturesque; a little open space on the shore of a small bay at the head of the lower lake. The place is densely timbered with cottonwood, and there is a thick

undergrowth. The beautiful silver-grey bark of the cottonwood is easily collected, and makes a very hot fire, but the smoke is unendurable; it has such a strong, pungent smell that when the wind blows it over to your side there is nothing for it but to shift to the other side, and it is wonderful how often the wind changes on such an occasion.

On the side we have left there are some beautiful grass meadows extending for miles. There is a luxuriant crop of hay, and it would make a splendid stock-raising land in the summer, but it would be unsuited for agriculture as the lake is over four thousand feet above the sea.

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Next day Falconer and I take the canvas boat through the narrow passage to the upper lake. It is hard rowing up against the stream, and the oars are so fragile that we dare not put too much force on to them, so that we have to manœuvre so as to get into the eddies as much as possible until we reach the open lake.

Once there it is all right, but all of a sudden a wind springs up, lashing the surface of the water into a commotion in a few minutes; it is marvellous how quickly a sea gets up in a long, narrow lake like this. We have to keep close in to the shelter of the shore, or our frail craft will be swamped. A couple of miles up a long sand-bar stretches nearly all the way across the lake, and we land and take a walk along it. It is simply teeming with footprints of all kinds—deer in profusion, large prints of cariboo and moose, numerous bear, coyotes, jack-rabbits, wild-fowl of many kinds; the country must be thick with game, but we see

none except a flock of what appear to be geese in the distance.

Three miles above us is a little islet surmounted by a few trees, which give it exactly the appearance of a man-of-war.

But our principal excursions are on the lower lake. One day we take our blankets and three days' provisions and set out for the lower end of the lake. After a time rowing becomes monotonous, and as there is a slight breeze we improvise a sail out of two pieces of gunny sack, cutting a stick for a mast. One of us holds up the mast while the other steers with an oar. It is a somewhat primitive arrangement, but better than rowing.

Now and then we stop and examine the shore, taking topographical notes also, which will help to "make geography." At the end of the lake ahead of us is a very prominent mountain, the end of a ridge extending away to the west; the land on the east side is much lower. We sail all round the base of this great mountain, and in the evening we camp at the very end of the lake. The stream issuing from the lake is far too rough for us to venture with our flimsy boat, but in the morning we take a walk down for a few miles. There is a trail here, for a regular Indian travelling route, quite a highway of communication, crosses the river at the end of the lake, leading from Hanceville on the Chilcotin to Lake Chilko. Presently we come to a camping ground, fishbones and fins littered all round. In the evening we strike camp and row up to a point at the base of the great mountain. There is no good camping ground near the shore, and we have to go up some little way on to the

flat ground above. A low pass extends away to the west. The trail follows this, having skirted round the base of the mountain, but it is very indistinct here, having become overgrown with the rapid growth of long grass. We fix upon a spot right at the foot of the mountain, and lay out our blankets. We have brought no tent with us, so that camping is a very simple matter, but as it threatens rain we rig up a kind of bivouac with the gunny sack which has served us for a sail. It is fortunate that we took this precaution, as it rains heavily during the night.

In the morning we make the ascent of the mountain, following up a draw.[1] It is very steep and the grass is exceedingly slippery. We pass through some thick belts of willow and other bushes, and in places there is quite a growth of jack-pine and spruce. Frequently we have to climb up on rock-slides; then it is a matter of clambering, hanging on by our hands; the rock fragments slide away under our feet, and progress is slow. After two hours of climbing we come to a knoll, where we pause and look round. There is the lake stretching away to the north, two thousand feet below us according to the aneroid. And we are barely half-way up yet.

A little creek descends in a draw close by and we quench our thirst in the delicious water straight from the snow above. Then we resume the climb, and another two hours' hard climbing brings us to the summit. On the face towards the lake the mountain is very rugged and there is a sheer drop down from the summit for several hundred feet,

[1] A small ravine on a steep hillside.

but at the back it is easy of access, the summit being the rounded extremity of a ridge extending away back to higher peaks beyond. In all the more sheltered places there is deep snow, but the actual summit is clear and grass-grown.

The height, according to the aneroid, is 8,250 feet, actually less than that of the glacier which we crossed in the pass on the way here. But the mountain occupies such a prominent position, being seen from all along the lake, that Falconer had set his heart upon my name being attached to it as a record of its first ascent, at any rate by white men. Such self-advertisement, however, does not appeal to me, and we make a compromise, finally deciding to give it the name of my home city, Cardiff, which fact is put on record by inscribing the name on a slab of wood which is buried in a cairn erected on the highest point. Loose stones of sufficient size are not very plentiful up there, and it takes us an hour to build even a small cairn.

The descent from the summit of Mount Cardiff is easy, although somewhat fatiguing, especially to the knees, and it is still early afternoon when we reach our bivouac. Wishing to have a pictorial record of our appearance sleeping under our improvised shelter with our hats over our heads to support the mosquito veils, we fix up dummies in the blankets to look as nearly like our own figures as possible, and the photo is taken. Then we pack up, return to the boat, and start off for an hour's row before stopping for the night.

But the night promises to be so fine that we decide only to stop for supper and then make a moonlight trip up the lake. The moon is full and

WHITEWATER LAKE

AN IMPROVISED SAIL

MOUNT CARDIFF.

To face p. 18.

it is almost as light as day. The mountains look mysterious and almost unreal, the water is smooth and deep and silent; altogether the scene is one of enchantment, and the cool night air is delicious after the heat of the day. This moonlight row is one of the most enjoyable experiences on the whole trip. There is seldom much breeze, and we cannot use the sail very much, but take it in turns to row, an hour at a time, and in the wee small hours of morning we arrive in camp, much to the surprise of Schwartz and Tommy, who are aroused from their peaceful slumbers by the sound of our paddles, and soon have a fire on and a pot of tea ready for us.

* * * * *

Now comes the return trip; we have decided not to go back to Lillooet by the same way that we came, but to make for Bridge River via Gun Creek, so we head south, following up one of the forks of Schwartz's Valley, and over a glacier into the Gun Creek watershed, and on along the high ground past Sheba's Breasts, twin peaks prominent for miles. But in order to avoid a long detour we descend into the valley. It is a beautiful, park-like valley, but Schwartz warns us there is swampy ground ahead and we must be careful. And sure enough, in crossing a bad piece of muskeg, two of the packhorses sink in up to their shoulders. Their packs are carefully removed, and by dint of pulling on their halter ropes they are safely extricated, but it is a nasty occurrence, and they might not have been so easily got out of the mire.

Meanwhile, the other horses have to be tethered,

lest they should stray over the bad ground and get mired too. Then all the horses have to be carefully led, feeling the way until firm ground is reached again.

In passing through a thicket we disturb a covey of fool-hens, a variety of grouse. They fly up, eleven of them, and settle in the low branches a few yards away. Schwartz gets out his twenty-two rifle and pots each one of them in turn; not one thinks of flying away. It is hardly sport, but that is the way a prospector replenishes his larder, and the birds certainly well deserve their name!

Once, on descending into a beautiful green valley, we see an Indian camp; there must be fifty horses there. They are Chilcotins, or Chillicotins as they are called here, hunting and collecting scammitch and berries. Schwartz will have nothing to do with them, and Tommy is in mortal terror of them; they are "bad men." There is no love lost between the Lillooets and the Chilcotins.

As we pass down Gun Creek towards Bridge River we meet a surveyor on his way up the valley; he is trying to find a pass through which to locate a railway from the coast up to some point on the Fraser, but what company he represents he does not know, or at any rate he will not say, such is the secrecy maintained by the many rival railway companies in the field.

* * * * *

Then we descend into the valley of the Bridge River. For some miles before we reach it the uppermost layer of soil consists of several feet of volcanic ash. But that doesn't seem to interfere with the fertility in any way; the growth is very

luxuriant. On entering the valley proper we pass through a forest of magnificent yellow fir and yellow pine, very handsome trees, three to four feet in diameter, with bright orange bark, that of the firs split into long, lenticular segments, and that of the pines into the peculiar short pieces characteristic of pines. We are again in the region of the succulent charkom berries, and they grow here in profusion.

There are a number of mines on Cadwallader Creek, a fork of Bridge River, and there is a very good trail from Lillooet. It is being converted into a wagon road, and about thirty miles have been completed already.

These Bridge Creek mines are interesting but very uncertain. The gold comes in pockets. You can get beautiful specimens; the manager of one mine presented me with a very handsome specimen of gold on quartz; but pockets are naturally unreliable, and the mines have not been a brilliant success so far. One of the most notorious wild-cat fiascos in the history of British Columbia was here, and it gave such a bad name to the country that the province still suffers from it, and the Bridge River in particular is even now looked upon with suspicion.

Some placer mining has been done by "hydraulicking"; two men are constructing a ditch and flume to work a property now. They have got something like a camp: a large double marquee to live in—bedroom at one end, living room at the other, all mosquito proof; comfortable deck-chairs and bookshelves; a kitchen adjoining, and, the greatest luxury of all, a huge canvas bath, six feet

square, let into the ground in a special tent, in which there is a gasolene stove. That is something like the way to live in camp! And these men are no mere sybarites; they are real hard workers, but they like comfort in the evenings and on Sundays.

They pressed us to stay the night, but we had to move on so as to get farther down the valley. We wished afterwards we had accepted their hospitality, for we had left our tents down on Bridge River, and, although it was a beautiful evening when we camped in the long grass in a pleasant meadow, we woke up in the morning to find a torrent of rain coming down and pools of water in our blankets. The rain stopped later, but it was a wet and forlorn company that sat down to breakfast at seven o'clock!

The brush is thick over the trail; the horses can pass easily, but we have to force our way through the elder and hooshum berry bushes, whose branches block the way at the height of a man on horseback. Each branch that is pushed aside scatters a shower over one, most of which generally seems to find its way down the back of one's neck; it is certainly no treat to ride first on such an occasion! However, the day is fine and the cheerful sunshine revives our drooping spirits as we descend the steep trail to the Bridge River and follow along the valley.

But next morning it rains again, and continues all day. Our slickers protect us down to the knees, but the water runs off the lower edge of the slicker below our knees, and our overalls are soon soaked and our boots filled with water.

There are a number of settlers along the valley,

and we are thankful when, late in the afternoon, we reach the "ranch" of an Irish-Canadian, who makes us welcome for the night. We change our soaked garments, and dry out our blankets before the fire, and what a comfort it is to have dry things on at last!

* * * * *

Next day we push on, and presently meet the parties working on the wagon road construction, after which travelling is very easy, for the road is new and well made.

After seventeen miles we leave the valley and climb up on to Mission Pass, for the river enters into a cañon, and the road leaves it and cuts across to Seton Lake. Near the top of the pass we camp. There is not much water to be had, but we manage to find a little spring.

Then we set out for the last day's ride. And coming over the pass, what a sight meets our eyes! Away to the south-west stretches Anderson Lake, the deep blue of its waters reflecting the rocky heights which hem it in, and, separated from Anderson Lake by a narrow strip of land, almost below our feet, but two thousand feet down, lies Seton Lake, its surface sparkling in the morning sun as it stretches away to the eastward. And on the edge of the lake, just below us, on a beautiful green flat, is a little white toy church surrounded by a dozen equally white dolls' houses. At least, they look like the tiniest of dolls' houses at that distance below us, and they all look so trim and neat, just as if they were straight out of a toyshop.

A precipitous, zigzag bit of road soon brings us down to the settlement, and the dolls' houses,

though now grown to full size, still have the neat, spick-and-span appearance of toys, each house having its little bit of well-kept garden. This is the Catholic Mission Settlement, from which the pass derives its name.

Then we jog on along the lake shore, and what a charming ride it is! Now the road is cut in the solid rock, again we emerge and skirt around a bay, the road supported on trestles in the lake itself, for the cliff rises sheer up; then we come to a more open bit, but not for long—it is nearly all rock. Sometimes we rise to a height of a hundred feet above the water, then on a sharp turn we look sheer down over the edge into the deep water below. But the road is well constructed throughout.

After skirting the lake for fifteen miles we reach its outlet into Cayoose Creek, and pass by the Government Trout Hatchery, with its immaculately kept lawns and beautiful flower gardens; then on past the fork of Cayoose Creek, where the clear green water from the lakes meets the turbid white water from the glaciers away to the south-west, and the two run alongside each other for a mile without mixing. And early in the afternoon, after a delightful trip of three weeks, we ride gaily into Lillooet.

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It is August now, and the famous Lillooet fruit is at its prime. Mr. Keiry hospitably invites us down to his orchard to roam at will and help ourselves, a privilege which we fully appreciate, for the golden apples and luscious plums are a glorious treat after three weeks of camp fare.

OUR BIVOUAC.

HORSES MIRED IN A MUSKEG.

GUN CREEK BRIDGE.

To face p. 74

But the enjoyment of this elysian feast is marred by the news which is contained in my mail. For on the very day that we set out so light-heartedly from Lillooet three weeks ago, my home away in the Slocan disappeared in smoke! Houses, mines, and everything have been wiped out by one of those terrible forest fires which are the bane of the country. So off I have to go to Vancouver without knowing what lies before me, and it is not until long afterwards that I learn that nearly all my effects have been saved by friends.

At one of the tables in the hotel there is a party of English people. The chief personage is a middle-aged lady, the typical *grande dame* of English social life, and strangely out of place here in the wild and woolly West. But she has come here for a definite purpose; her son has married a Western girl, and she has come out to inspect and pass judgment. There is no need to ask what the judgment has been; one has only to look at the happy faces of the group round the table. And how could it have been otherwise? Just look at the young bride handling her cayoose as they start out on their afternoon ride—what a picture of happy, healthy womanhood! And it is good to see her with the English sister; they are bosom friends and have many things to discuss together, things beyond the ken of any mere man. Both are pretty, but how different! And how different their lives are! It is good for Old Country people to come out here sometimes and see something of the life of the West.

The sister is enjoying it immensely; she will certainly want to come back for another visit, and

then perhaps she will stay on this side, for there are always many young men looking out for wives, and an attractive girl cannot remain single very long over here.

But of all the group the happiest is the young brother, a lad of sixteen. One can imagine his feelings. Fancy leaving a solid, respectable English school for the summer holidays and coming to Lillooet! And roaming at will on a cayoose among the glorious mountains and lakes. Fancy being suddenly transplanted into these surroundings with all the glamour and romance of boyhood upon one! To him, life in the wild West is just one continuous summer holiday, amidst the ideal surroundings for which his heart has been yearning ever since he first read of cowboys and Red Indians. No wonder he wants to stay out here with his big brother; it would be a marvel if he didn't! How inexpressibly dull life in England will seem after this! He will certainly come back later if he cannot stay now. And he is the kind that is wanted in this country.

But I must leave this happy group to their rides and their rambles and face the dusty road once more. And as luck will have it I come in sight of Lytton just in time to see the afternoon train steaming out, and have to wait there until 2 a.m., for the night train is late. And when I once get on board there is not a berth in a sleeper to be had, and it is only after going from one end of the train to the other three times that I finally find a place to sit down in until Vancouver is reached in the morning.

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CHAPTER III

THE ISLAND

In Eastern Canada only one island is known; if any one mentions "the Island" he is understood to refer to the island province, Prince Edward Island.

So it is in the West; there are countless thousands of islands along the coast of British Columbia, but if any one speaks of "the Island," it is Vancouver Island that is referred to.

People in the Old Country seem to have very peculiar ideas about Vancouver Island; many imagine it to be something comparable to the Isle of Wight, if so large, and it is a shock to them to hear that it is nearly three hundred miles long, and from fifty to eighty wide. The misconception is very likely due to the fact that in all but the most recent atlases Canada is shown on such a small scale that the size of such an island is not realized.

Another prevalent error is due to the confusion between the city of Vancouver and the Island. People tell you they have relatives in Vancouver, and, after vainly trying to locate them, and find in what part of the city they live, you discover that they are really in some remote place on the Island! It is rather unfortunate that the Terminal City on the mainland should have been given the same name

as the island, for the confusion is natural to those unfamiliar with the geography of these parts, but such is the case, and we must make the best of it.

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At the south-eastern extremity of the Island is situated the beautiful Queen City, sleepy little Victoria, as it is patronizingly called by the busy citizens of Vancouver, who are jealous of the fact that Victoria is the capital of the province. But at the time the choice was made there was no question of Vancouver as an alternative. The only other serious candidate for the post was the Royal City, New Westminster, and it would surely have been a worse thorn in Vancouver's side if little Westminster, only twelve miles away, now a mere adjunct of the larger city, had been made the capital! No, a wise choice was made when Victoria was fixed upon as the seat of government; it far surpasses Vancouver as a residential place, and in climate.

It is indeed a delightful place to live in; the rainfall is much less than in Vancouver; in fact, it is a little too dry in summer; the grass gets parched up, and the gardens have to be continually watered.

The winters are mild; it is like the South Coast of England. In summer there is always a slight breeze in the evenings, which are invariably cool. That is in one way a drawback, as one cannot sit out of doors late in the evening with comfort; but the fact that the nights are always cool, no matter how hot it has been during the day, will be appreciated by those who have lived in the East (that is to say, Eastern Canada or United States; Eastern Asia

is referred to either as the Orient or as the Far East, in spite of the fact that you have to go west to get there).

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Victoria may well be proud of her Government buildings ; they are probably one of the most elegant and well-proportioned groups of buildings in the world. The view as one comes round the point, past the unsightly soap works into the little harbour, never fails to excite the admiration of all who see it for the first time.

The Government buildings are on the right, and straight ahead is the beautiful Empress Hotel, built of pink stone, of elegant design, with bright beds of flowers in front, and immaculate green lawns sloping down to the causeway which runs across the head of the harbour.

Not many years ago this was a marsh ; it was possible to travel in a canoe through the sloughs for quite a long way from the head of the harbour. Now, thanks to the enterprise of "sleepy little Victoria" and the C.P.R., to which the Empress Hotel belongs, the head of the harbour presents as pleasing a prospect as one could wish to see.

And the interior of the hotel is in keeping with the exterior. The furniture is not only beautiful, but arranged for comfort. The lounge and the palm-house are simply magnificent ; every afternoon and evening they are thronged with visitors who come to discuss business or to listen to the music.

The Grand Trunk Pacific Railway is going to build a hotel on a site close by, to vie with the "Empress." It will have a hard job to surpass it !

But there is lots of room for it, for the "Empress" is always full, although there are a number of other hotels in the city.

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One peculiarity about Victoria is that, whichever way you go, you come to the sea in a short distance. The harbour faces west, turning round in a southerly direction at the entrance; on the south, after passing through beautiful Beacon Hill Park, you come to the coast again in a mile. There we can descend to the beach, or sit on the top of the cliffs and contemplate the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the great, mysterious Olympic Mountains in the State of Washington beyond. Wonderful effects of mirage are seen here on a hot summer's day; a lighthouse appears to be four hundred feet high; its image is repeated four or five times above it, alternately inverted and erect.

Then on the east, after traversing some of the finest residential districts, passing close to Government House, the residence of the Lieutenant-Governor, we come in less than three miles to Oak Bay, where are situate the racecourse and the golf-links. It is a very pleasant suburb, looking out over the Strait of Georgia and San Juan Island. On a clear day the snow-capped dome of Mount Baker is seen rising high above everything, seventy-five miles to the east.

To the north we come in a few miles to Cordova Bay, with its expanse of sand, one of the favourite summer camping-places in the immediate vicinity of the city.

Victoria Harbour itself is very small, only suitable for the coasting steamers: the ocean liners, of which

GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, VICTORIA.

A FISHING VILLAGE.

To face p. 80.

there are many, crossing to the Orient, Australia, etc., have to use the Outer Wharf, outside the harbour. There is not room to accommodate many vessels there, and in order to give greater harbour facilities, an extensive scheme of breakwaters has been proposed. But the simplest plan would be to make use of the excellent harbour of Esquimalt (pronounced *Eskwymault*, with the accent on the "y"). This is two miles west of Victoria, and is a splendid harbour. It was the British naval base in the Pacific, but since Canada has started to run a fleet of her own it is no longer used as such, and might well become the harbour of greater Victoria.

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The city itself is not very exciting. Some fine business blocks have been put up within recent years, but in comparison with Vancouver or Seattle it is very insignificant.

But the residential districts are grand. Beautiful asphalted roads with cemented sidewalks, elegant villas surrounded by well-kept gardens, a profusion of brilliant flowers, and shady trees, all give the impression of homelike comfort, combined with that good taste which is so often lacking in the best suburbs of the larger cities.

Oak-trees grow here, but as they have only been introduced since the Island has been colonized, none have attained to any great size yet. On the mainland they have never been persuaded to grow. One of the most beautiful trees is the arbutus, with its brilliant red trunk and long, shining, dark green leaves.

The country is very rocky. Now and then we come

to a tump of rugged, dark grey rock; numerous little hills are dotted about, and the suburban roads wind around them or ascend at an easy grade. There is none of the fearful monotony of the rectangular block system, cutting through everything in dead straight lines, which spoils American cities from an æsthetic point of view, although greatly facilitating the finding of one's way.

In Victoria West there are some very fine residences, reminding one strongly of the Old Country, except that on closer inspection all the houses are found to be built of wood. Until a few years ago there was an Indian Reservation between Victoria West and the Harbour, across which one had to pass in going from the city to its western suburb. It was an intolerable state of affairs to see such a large area in such a location lying waste, occupied only by a few Indians, and after much negotiation it was bought by the city, a large sum of money being paid in addition to the granting of a new reservation some miles away. The Siwashes had never seen so much money before, and didn't know what to do with it. Shortly afterwards some of them were seen driving about the city in their own autos! And as for clothes and finery, the dealers in personal adornment of all descriptions simply had the time of their lives!

Then along towards the Gorge there are beautiful houses with delightful gardens sloping down to the water. Their occupants can go in to business in gasolene launches, a most enjoyable trip of a couple of miles.

At the Gorge itself is a nice shady park, a favourite evening resort where people come out to

listen to the band, or to bathe or take a turn in a light boat or canoe. An elegant bridge crosses the little cañon from which the place derives its name; it is really a charming spot. It is a very popular bathing-place, and on a hot summer's afternoon or evening the water is crowded. But it is shallow near the bathing establishment, and the water gets very warm. I always preferred the open sea of the Strait of Juan de Fuca on the south side of the town.

There is no bathing establishment there; one must undress on the shingle beach. The water out there is cold, sometimes too cold. It is the water of the Fraser River, whose mouth is sixty miles away, but which is carried down past the end of the island without getting warmed up very much. Sometimes on a broiling hot day in August, when it is scarcely possible to lie down on the shingle without getting burnt by the contact, the water is so icy that it is simply a case of dash in and out again.

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I was once standing on the bridge at the Gorge, contemplating the view, when an American lady sailed down upon me with the exclamation "Please to tell me whaiy they cahl this the Gawaarge!" It seemed to me so obvious that I was rather at a loss to explain it to her without apparent rudeness, but fortunately she didn't trouble to wait for my answer, giving vent to ejaculations of admiration at the "waiyldness" of the scene. She was carrying a vanity bag covered all over with brilliantly coloured labels, advertising in very large letters the fact that she had been "doing" the Grand Cañon of the Colorado and other famous places in the

West, and I was not a little surprised that, coming straight from such scenes, she should be so enthusiastic over our little gorge.

Then I was left in peace once more; she had "done" the Gorge, and proceeded to "do" the rest of the sights of Victoria.

Some of the visitors to Victoria are very amusing; it is quite a sight to watch the arrival of the Seattle boat on a summer's day. An excursion to the Queen City is a very favourite trip from Seattle, either just for the day, returning by the night boat, or for a longer period.

As a place of business they hardly take Victoria seriously at all, but as a place of beauty the Seattle trippers, like all other visitors, are loud in its praise.

The cheap tripper from Seattle is a curious apparition. Eternally chewing gum, his jaws are never still for a moment, but always moving in the most hideous contortions; his clothes are cut so as to give him as nearly as possible a diamond-shaped profile; a coat, narrow at the top, very full at the lower extremity, and of excessive length; a ludicrous exaggeration of the monstrosity known as "peg-top" trousers; bright yellow shoes, brogued in the most violent patterns, with laces an inch wide tied in enormous bows; at least six inches of sock visible, purple and yellow, or some such delicate combination of tints; to crown all, an immense shock of hair, four inches long at the back, projecting two inches from the back of the head down as far as the top of the neck, and there abruptly cut off, the neck being shaved and shining like a billiard ball! and a round, flat hat perched at an

angle on the top of this, generally sloping down over the eyes in a way that is imagined by the wearer to give him a knowing look, but really has a most ludicrous effect.

The female of the species I will not attempt to describe, not knowing the technical names for the various parts of her get-up. I only add that the gum-chewing habit is by no means confined to the male.

Of course, they are not all quite so terrible, and it is understood that the description is only intended to apply to the vulgar "nut" who comes over in thousands, not to the better class Americans, nor to those of the lower class who do not attempt to be dandies.

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There is a splendid service of boats "round the Sound" between Vancouver, Victoria, and Seattle; three services each way daily between the two Canadian ports, one of which in each direction is on the "triangular run," going round the three ports continuously in the same direction. There are also other steamers running between Seattle and each of the other cities. This is apart from the numerous boats which start out from one of these places and call at another on the way farther afield.

There used to be an American company running between Seattle and Victoria in opposition to the C.P.R. boats. Tariff wars ensued, and one summer when the American company reduced their fare from $2 to 50c., the C.P.R. retaliated by dropping theirs to two bits. Fancy a seven hours' trip on a magnificent steamer for 25 cents!

The trip between Vancouver and Victoria is most enjoyable. There is sometimes a slight swell in the Sound, which is described by those who have never been farther afield as a rough sea, but generally it is beautifully calm.

The first half from Vancouver is in the open Sound, or, to be more correct, the Strait of Georgia, but about half-way across we get in among the islands which extend out on the eastern side of Vancouver Island from the vicinity of Nanaimo right away into Puget Sound. The passage through Active Pass is always interesting, first the lighthouse, then the Pass opening out to view as we round the point, the summer hotel on Mayne Island and the attractive-looking little settlement, the Indian villages on either side, the high, rocky bluffs of Galiano Island, the sharp bend in the Pass, and once more we are in the open with Pender Island ahead. Only one thing mars the enjoyment of the passage, and that is the hideous great boards stuck up in prominent positions announcing the fact that one or another hotel in Victoria is the best and most moderate. Even here the glorious scenery can't be left alone, but must be sacrificed on the altar of the Almighty Dollar! Once the rents were allowed to expire, and they were all pulled down early in the morning, but unfortunately the rents were soon paid up and the boards were allowed once more to disfigure the view.

From Active Pass on we are among islands all the way until we approach the shore of Vancouver Island. As we pass Cormorant Bay we have on our left the large island of San Juan, belonging

"HOUSE ROCK," GALIANO ISLAND.

SUNSET, PORTIER PASS.

To face p. 86.

to the State of Washington. It is only some fifteen miles across from Victoria to this foreign island. But North America is in a more fortunate position than Europe; there is not a single fortification along the whole length of the International Boundary. The very term used is significant; it is not a frontier, simply a boundary.

But the most striking feature of the trip is the great Olympic Range away in the distance, dominating the view by its majestic grandeur, a great rugged chain of peaks extending along the south side of the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

Then we double Gonzales Point, passing close to Trial Islands, and steam up past the Golf Links, the Wireless Station, the Cemetery, the Rifle Range, Beacon Hill, the Outer Wharf, and finally turn in to the narrow entrance of Victoria Harbour, Work Point with its barracks on the left, industrial wharves on the right, then round the soapworks point, and up to our berth on the C.P.R. wharf close to the handsome Government Buildings.

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Although we pass among the Gulf Islands on the way across, we don't call anywhere; these beautiful islands, lying right between two great cities, are really very much isolated. There is a steamer once a week which calls at a number of places on the islands, but if you want to get about among them it is necessary to have a launch.

Some of the larger islands are already well under cultivation; the numerous ranches send their products to Victoria, Nanaimo, Ladysmith, Vancouver, and other places. But other islands are still covered with dense forest; logging camps are busy

in places. Some of the smaller islands are only used for sheep grazing; there is not sufficient water on them for human habitation.

It is delightful to travel about among the islands in a launch, landing here and there and walking through a perfect natural park, over soft, velvety grass, among the cedars and hemlocks, or along a rocky beach, taking to the launch again where further progress is difficult. Sometimes we go into a long, narrow bay, perhaps two or three miles long, high rocky bluffs on each side, surmounted by a dense forest growth. Then we come to a beautiful little sandy beach, and a flat valley where a rancher has settled. At nightfall we stop at some such ranch, or perhaps a lighthouse, to sleep; they are all very hospitable, but the accommodation is naturally somewhat limited.

In some of the narrow passages between the islands there are very strong tidal currents. The tides are most irregular, owing to the complexity of the various channels, and the two daily high tides may come much closer together than one would think possible. There is generally one big tide and one small one, that is to say, that whereas one tide rises and falls ten or fifteen feet, the other may have a height of only a couple of feet; the combinations in some places are most weird.

Some very peculiar freaks are seen among the rocks; at one place there is an isolated piece of rock standing out some distance from the cliff, with a gable roof like a small house.

On Gabriola Island, not far from Nanaimo, is the famous Malaspina Gallery, where a soft bed of sandstone has been hollowed out by the sea

to a depth of ten or fifteen feet over quite a long distance, the harder bed overhanging giving a peculiar and picturesque effect.

This is one of the most beautiful of all the islands. On one occasion, as I was landing from a launch on the rocky shore, she grounded just as I stepped off. We tried to prize her off with the boathook, and finding that useless, we tried by wading to ease her a bit, using logs for levers, but the tide was falling so fast that all our efforts were vain, and there she remained for seven hours until the tide had turned and risen sufficiently to float her again. Meanwhile I had lots of time to see that part of the island, which is well under cultivation, there being numerous ranches, and a road as good as an English country road (which is very much better than anything on the mainland) running along the coast. The grass appeared greener there than anywhere else I have seen in B.C.; one might imagine oneself transplanted into the Old Country, so homelike does it all look.

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Seventy miles up the coast from Victoria is the little colliery town of Nanaimo. When I describe it as a colliery town you will no doubt conjure up visions of chimneys, and smoke, and grime, and dismal rows of dirty, gloomy houses.

But nothing could be farther from the reality. Although one of the collieries is practically in the town, the workings extending all under the harbour, Nanaimo is the brightest, cleanest, sunniest, and most cheerful little place imaginable; the miners (the term "collier" is not used here) live in comfort-

able little wooden cottages, each in its own garden, in which great pride is taken, and they go to and from their work mostly on bicycles. And the better class residences are most attractive; it is really a charming place; the climate is even better than in Victoria.

The Western Fuel Company has very seldom had any trouble with its men; the relations between employers and employed are of the most cordial. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of the Wellington Collieries, formerly owned by the Dunsmuirs, and now by a subsidiary company of the Canadian Northern Railway. Their shipping ports are Ladysmith, twelve miles south-east of Nanaimo, and Comox, sixty miles farther up the coast.

Each company has great wharves and bunkers; for by far the greater part of the coal goes off by sea, not only across to Vancouver, but also in great quantities down the coast to California and Mexico. A lot also goes to Alaska. This is all put up in small sacks like ore, so as to be more easily handled when frozen, for it naturally cannot be kept dry. The coasting steamers generally call at one or other of the Island ports to fill their bunkers.

The most prominent thing in Nanaimo is the old Hudson's Bay Company bastion, a relic of the old days when it was necessary to fortify the place against the Indians.

Between Victoria and Nanaimo there are some beautiful farming and residential districts. Duncans especially is a great place for retired Army men and others to settle in, playing at farming, or really

CAMPBELL RIVER FALLS.

FELLING A FOREST GIANT.

To face p. 90.

going in for it seriously, and it would be hard to find a more delightful place for the purpose.

Coming up the railway from Victoria, past Goldstream, the Saanich Inlet is skirted for some miles; the precipitous, rocky scenery is simply grand. Then we get out into the more open ranching country. It is only a strip a few miles in width along the coast, mostly densely timbered except where it has been cleared; the greater part of the Island is mountains, the West Coast being very rugged. But there are fine valleys in many parts, which only want railways to bring them within reach of the market.

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The Island is almost cut in two by the long, narrow Alberni Canal, which comes in from the West Coast. The little port of Alberni at its head is only about twelve miles from the East Coast. It was boomed for a long time as the coming Pacific port of the C.P.R., but that has subsided since the line there has been opened. Port Alberni will no doubt one day take its place as one of several West Coast ports, but it is not very suitable for large ocean steamers, especially when there is such a magnificent harbour as Quatsino farther up.

The C.P.R. lines on the Island are known as the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway, that being the name of the original line before it was taken over by the C.P.R. The depot in Victoria is worthy of the smallest and most remote village in the Dominion, being a disgrace to the capital of the province. But no doubt, when the railway is through to the northern end of the Island, a new depot will be built in Victoria.

There is another station in the city, that of the Victoria and Sidney Terminal Railway, belonging to the Great Northern, one of the great American railroad systems in the North-West. The V. and S.T. Railway is about the limit for a one-horse concern. It is only eighteen miles long, running to Sidney on the Saanich Peninsula, where a ferry connects with the mainland fifty miles away. The B.C. Electric has built a line out through the peninsula, which will seriously knock the V. and S.T. The latter has within recent years built a new station, which, although very small, is bright and clean; formerly the train ran in to a dilapidated little apology for a wooden platform at the back of the market, and the booking-office was a dingy little cabin in the market building.

The Canadian Northern has been busy for the last few years building a line from Victoria up through the interior of the Island to Alberni, and thence on towards Campbell River on the East Coast. This will open up a lot of new country. The E. and N. is also building in the direction of Campbell River, and both lines will no doubt be continued later on to Quatsino.

The Grand Trunk Pacific is also to have an Island line, but that has not been started yet.

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Campbell River is just north of the 50th parallel, not far from Seymour Narrows. It is a favourite fishing resort; both river and sea fishing are excellent.

There are several logging camps in the neighbourhood; the timber is some of the best on the Island, trees four and five feet in diameter being quite

common, mostly Douglas fir and cedar. There is some hemlock too, but that is of no value except for pulp. A short railway line connects the camps with the mouth of the river. It is an interesting sight to see the great logs being pushed off the flat cars into the water by a kind of steam ram, working with a sweeping motion.

In the river mouth the logs are collected into vast "booms" and towed down by tugs to the lumber mills on the Fraser and elsewhere. Occasionally in a storm a "boom" breaks, and the valuable timber is scattered all over the Strait, logs being washed up on the beach at all sorts of places.

A logging camp is considered one of the roughest places in the wild and woolly West; some pretty tough characters are met with among the lumberjacks, and when they start fighting with their caulked boots on there is liable to be fun.

But on the Canadian side of the line the law is held in considerable respect. At Campbell River they seem to have a very decent lot of men as a rule, including, as everywhere, a large proportion of Scandinavians and Finns.

The river itself is quite a small one, but about a dozen miles from the mouth there is a high fall, where the possibilities of power development are considerable. At the foot of the falls the river takes a sudden turn of more than a right angle to the left.

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It is only a few miles across to Valdes Island, really a group of three islands, separated from each other and from the mainland by narrow channels.

The steamship route is between Vancouver Island and these smaller ones. At one place it is so narrow that the tide race is terrific, and all but the largest steamers have to wait for a favourable tide before attempting the passage. This is the famous Seymour Narrows.

If there is a strong wind against the tide the sea is liable to be pretty heavy. On one occasion I was returning from the Queen Charlotte Islands on a small steamer, when after passing through Seymour Narrows with the tide, the head-wind, coming up the Straits against the tide, created such a choppy sea that the screw of the steamer was racing half the time, and it was impossible to steer her; she would swing half round with every big wave. After trying to buck it for a time, the captain took advantage of a particularly big wave to swing her right round, and we went back into a bay in Valdes Island to shelter until the sea calmed down a bit in the evening. It certainly can be pretty rough in this neighbourhood if it wants to.

There has been a talk for some time of bridging Seymour Narrows so as to bring the Island into direct railway communication with the mainland. Perhaps it will be done some day, but it will be a great undertaking.

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Up towards the north-western end of the Island there are some interesting places. The coasting steamers call at the little settlement of Sointula, where all the settlers are Finns; at other points the Scandinavian element seems to preponderate.

But the most interesting port of call is Alert Bay, an Indian village, presided over by a missionary.

DUMPING LOGS INTO THE WATER AT THE MOUTH OF CAMPBELL RIVER.

CHIEF'S HOUSE AND TOTEM POLES, ALERT BAY.

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Here are the most famous totem poles of the whole British Columbian coast, and fearful and wonderful they certainly are! Unfortunately, a number of them have been bought and taken away for museums and other places, but a fine lot remain there. Behind one totem pole an enormous pair of wings has been painted on the house, giving it a very imposing appearance when seen from a distance. On either side of the house of Chief Tlahcoglas is a fearsome winged monster, surmounting a series of frogs, semi-human faces, and such things, the sort of monster one would not like to meet alone on a dark night.

There is a prevalent idea that totem poles are objects of worship, but that is entirely erroneous; they are the family coats-of-arms, which, instead of being displayed on silver, and carriages, and writing-paper, are put up in front of the house. The various grotesque figures on each pole—men, fishes, frogs, birds, etc.—all have a significance understood by those versed in this system of heraldry.

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Then, farther up again, we pass the colliery at Suquash, and a few miles beyond is Port Hardy, another place which has been boomed as a coming great city—why, it is rather hard to understand.

The first time I went to Quatsino was by this route. It is only eleven miles across the trail from Port Hardy to Coal Harbour on Quatsino Sound. The mail is taken in over this trail every week, as the steamer only goes up the West Coast twice a month. A certain amount of money is spent every year in keeping the trail in order, apparently,

with the object of affording employment to a number of men, for if they would only make a wagon-road once and for all, it would need much less patching up afterwards, and would be infinitely more useful. Horses could be taken over the trail if there were any to take, but the mail-carrier packs the mail-bag on his back. He comes from Quatsino settlement in a launch, which comes again for him on his return trip the next day, and takes any passengers that may have come across this way.

After toiling over the eleven miles with a heavy pack on your back, stumbling over roots every now and then, the first view of Quatsino Sound is a most welcome sight. The timber is so dense that we don't see anything of it until we are almost there, coming down the hill towards Coal Harbour; then we catch a glimpse through the trees of a great sheet of water, and soon afterwards we come upon it. A rapid descent brings us to the shore of a deep bay, where coal was discovered many years ago, but which has never been thoroughly prospected yet.

Beyond Coal Harbour the West Arm extends twenty miles up to the westwards, a long, narrow inlet, reduced in places to half a mile in width. At the far end is the settlement of Holberg, where the rich St. Joseph Valley is gradually being settled by a large colony of Scandinavians, who are valiantly tackling the very heavy clearing that is necessary before the ground can be brought under cultivation.

On our left is the Rupert Arm, extending for seven miles back towards the East Coast. Opposite

us this portion of the Sound is some three miles wide, a magnificent sheet of water. But unfortunately it is separated from the main Sound by the Narrows, a deep gorge through which the tidal current is something fierce.

The launch goes through flying with the tide, between the high rocky bluffs on either side, the water swirling and raging all round us, and after an exciting passage, we emerge into Quatsino Sound proper. If the inner portion excited our admiration, what can we say of the outer? It is one of the finest harbours in the world, stretching for twenty miles from the mouth of the Narrows to the open sea, the entrance being well protected and completely landlocked. It is a magnificent sheet of water, and undoubtedly destined to become a great port before very many years have passed.

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There are a number of deep inlets extending for some distance from the main Sound, one, the South-East Arm, having a length of some fourteen miles and a width of only about a mile, being hemmed in by steep mountains on either side. A number of mineral locations are situated along this arm, but so far none have reached the shipping stage.

It was on another of these inlets, Koprino Harbour, that I once had occasion to steal a canoe. I was out for a few days with a gasolene launch, making excursions inland at different points each day. On one occasion I had been following a creek up from the head of a long, narrow lagoon opening on Koprino Harbour, and left it until rather late in the afternoon before turning back. Travelling

is exceedingly difficult anywhere on Vancouver Island, the undergrowth is so dense; sometimes it is impossible to force one's way through along a creek and one is obliged to make a detour along the higher ground. Or in a ravine we may get into a patch of devil's club, a plant that well deserves its name. You step on a portion of the stem which grows horizontally, when suddenly another portion of it which grows nearly upright gives you a sharp blow. It is covered all over, the enormous, spreading leaves as well as the thick, woody stem, with little thorns which are the very devil if you get them into your skin. And they have a way of penetrating through your clothes too if you are not very careful. You must wear thick gloves if you want to attempt to negotiate a patch of devil's club. But nobody would think of going into the bush at any season without these.

Travelling at that particular place was rendered more difficult still on account of the enormous number of windfalls, a reminder of the "Great Wind," or tornado, which swept this part a few years ago. Enormous forest giants were torn up by the roots and hurled down in thousands, but only over a very narrow track. It happened that I was within that track; there were great logs, a hundred feet and often much more in length, lying with their butts raised ten or fifteen feet from the ground by a mass of roots. One might travel half a mile, climbing over, under, and between these logs without touching terra firma at all. Sometimes one came to an impasse, and had to go back two or three hundred yards and try again.

So my progress was not rapid, but ultimately, to my intense relief, I reached the head of the lagoon, only to find that the tide had gone out, so I knew that I would meet the launch at the mouth of the lagoon, half a mile farther on.

I started to make my way along close to the water's edge, but soon came to a cliff rising sheer up two hundred feet. So I had to retrace my steps for some distance, and climb up, hanging on by the skin of my teeth, for a height of about three hundred feet, and proceed along the high ground. Here I found the windfalls worse than ever, and progress was exceedingly slow. Dusk was rapidly falling, and I heard rifle-shots fired from the launch to guide me.

I had lost sight of the lagoon for some time, but knew that by keeping on westwards I must strike Koprino Harbour somewhere near the mouth of the lagoon. It was November, and darkness was coming on very fast, when at last from a height I caught sight of water ahead. Joyfully I made my way towards it, jumping from log to log, climbing under one and over another, forcing my way through thick masses of underbrush, anything to reach the shore before dark, for if I got caught by darkness in this tangle, it would be a sheer impossibility to make my way out before the moon rose.

* * * * *

Finally, to my great relief, I found myself at the top of a rocky slope, at the foot of which was the water, and there was, moreover, a dark object moving along the face of the water.

Hurriedly I made my way down, and shouted to

the Indian in the canoe, for such it proved to be. He had come quite close in by the time I reached the water's edge, and in my best Chinook I tried to explain to him that there was a launch round the point to the right, and that I wanted him to take me to it; but he said that the tide was out, and he couldn't get there, besides which the launch must be a long way off. After a long argument he consented to take me on board, but instead of going towards the launch, he went in the opposite direction along the shore, to the rancheree half a mile off, where he was living, apparently alone, all the other Indians being employed at the cannery across the Sound.

At the rancheree he pulled the canoe up on the shore, and made it fast, refusing point blank to let me take it out and go to the launch myself.

So I set off along the shore, but presently had to climb up on to a rocky height, and could get no farther without going through the bush. It was now quite dark, and travelling through the bush was altogether out of the question.

Knowing that I couldn't be very far from the mouth of the lagoon, I shouted repeatedly at the top of my voice, when, to my surprise, an answering shout came from the opposite direction, farther out. Making my way back towards the rancheree, I continued shouting, and the answer grew gradually louder. So I kept on, right past the rancheree, where the smoke was rising from my friend's shack, and out towards the next point. Evidently, the tide having gone out, my man had taken his launch out after firing the rifle-shots, and anchored her farther

QUATSINO INDIAN VILLAGE.

INDIAN CANOES, QUATSINO.

To face p. 100.

out, where there was still water, for this side of Koprino Harbour is very shallow.

The answering shouts were very plain now, and I felt that if I could get round that next point, a mile from the rancheree, I should see the launch close by. But as I approached the point, the rocky shore came to an end, and I had to climb up on to the bank. The trees grew right down on the edge, overhanging the water, but I struggled on a little farther, climbing in among the trees and underbrush, for the open water below enabled me to see a little, but soon I had to come to a halt. Then I shouted again, and, oh, horror! the reply came from away back in the opposite direction, and I knew, as I had half suspected for some time, that the answering shout had been nothing but a mocking echo all along, and that I had come all this way on a wild-goose chase!

So sorrowfully I made my way back to the rancheree. My clothes were wet, and my feet soaking after all this travelling through the bush, and having no matches I couldn't light a fire. It was beginning to get cold, and a mist was rising. I therefore decided to go to the old Siwash's shack, and ask if he would let me sit by the fire. He made me welcome, but still wouldn't listen to any proposal to borrow his canoe. He had already had his supper, but offered to give me some. Not being able to explain in Chinook that I was a vegetarian, I had to refuse, although I was distinctly hungry. So he lay down again, fully clothed, rolled up in his blanket, his head resting on a sloping wooden pillow, which certainly did not look particularly comfortable, and after having pointed out

to me where I could get more wood to *mamook piah*—i.e. "make fire"—he addressed himself to Morpheus.

The fire was very comforting after being outside in the damp mist, but in my wet condition I didn't fancy stopping there all night. I knew that the tide must have turned about half-past eight, and that three hours later the launch should be afloat again. By that time the moon, which was full, would be high enough up to shine down into this side of the harbour. So I made my plans accordingly.

My aged friend was soon snoring volubly on his hard couch, and I let the fire dwindle, and waited in patience.

* * * * *

At half-past eleven I went stealthily to the door, and cautiously raised the latch and opened it. The door creaked so loudly that I was sure my host would wake, but to my unbounded relief, he continued peacefully snoring.

Outside I was cheered by the sight of the full moon high in the heavens. The mist had gone, and the scene was beautiful in the extreme: the white shell beach, the deep blue of the smooth water of the harbour, the little rocky islands dotted about, the high rock bluffs above, and the ghostly trees; a brilliantly lit scene where the moon shone, dark and mysterious shadows where the silvery rays failed to reach.

Cautiously making my way to the beach, I undid the painter, and dragged the canoe half-way down to the water's edge. It was freezing now, and the beach, composed of small fragments of shells, made

a crackling as I walked over it loud enough to waken the dead. What was my dismay, on getting half-way down to the water, to find that the heavy stone anchor had been thrown out right up at the top among the grass! So hastily I returned for it, expecting every moment to see my aged host emerging from the shack door to see what was going on. But he never appeared, and I got the anchor safely into the canoe, pushed her down into the water, stepped inside and paddled rapidly off, looking back every now and then towards the shack.

A quarter of an hour's paddling brought me to the mouth of the lagoon, and there, over on the other side, still high and dry, was the launch.

Pushing on as far as I could, I threw out the anchor, and walked across the intervening two hundred yards of hard sand and climbed on board, much to the relief of my man, who had been wondering what had become of me.

It was not very long before she was afloat again, and we went off and picked up the canoe, anchoring at 3 a.m. in deeper water for the rest of the night.

In the morning we moved off towards the rancheree with the canoe in tow, and were presently met by another canoe with two Indians in it. So there evidently had been another man somewhere about, and another canoe. My late host grinned broadly as we approached, evidently appreciating the joke, and caught his canoe, which I released in passing, but it was not until I had called his attention to it that he noticed the dollar bill that I had stuck in the bow to propitiate him. Then he

grinned more than ever, and paddled off quite happily.

* * * * *

The settlement of Quatsino is very scattered; ranchers have taken up land all over the Sound, but there are a number of settlers close together about three miles from the Indian village of Quatsino. It is a beautiful situation: to the east are the Narrows, to the west the mountains rise up a couple of thousand feet, densely timbered, to the north is the West Arm, and to the south the main Sound; it is a splendid site for a large city, which there will undoubtedly be here before very many years have passed. There are rival townsites at various points on the Sound, but the Settlement is well located; it is the pick of them all.

The Narrows will have to be bridged by the railways in order to reach it, but that will not be such a very big job. There is certainly the making of a really magnificent city at Quatsino, and the harbour is worth a dozen of Vancouver, fine as that undoubtedly is. Moreover, it is a substantially shorter distance to the Orient from Quatsino than from any other port on the coast, except Prince Rupert, and the difference between these is only forty miles. It is not generally known that sailing on a great circle from Prince Rupert to Yokohama is impossible, the Aleutian Islands intervene, whereas the great circle from Quatsino just escapes them.

Of course, Quatsino has the disadvantage that it is not on the mainland, and, unless Seymour Narrows are bridged, it will only be the shipping port for perishable goods and passengers; ordinary

freight will continue to go from Vancouver. But in the event of a bridge being built over Seymour Narrows, Quatsino will probably become the chief Pacific Port of at least one trans-continental railway.

So the inhabitants are justified in their sanguine belief in the future of the place.

* * * * *

The enterprising Norwegian mail-carrier has built a handsome villa, which he uses as a guest-house, the only hotel in the place being on an island some four miles away.

There is a large Scandinavian element in the population, many having come from the Middle West of the States, where their parents settled forty or fifty years ago.

On one occasion when I was there, a dance was given in the little public hall, and people came in by the dozen; one wondered where they all came from.

And these Scandinavians are beautiful dancers in spite of their heavy appearance and the fact that most of them were wearing heavy boots! To see the mail-carrier go over the trail from Port Hardy, one would hardly imagine him to be a dancing man, but he is the Master of Ceremonies, and the lightest and most active dancer in the whole room, with the possible exception of his buxom wife, and two little girls, who must have learnt all their dancing from their parents. It is quite a revelation to find such grace and agility, and thorough familiarity with many complicated dances, in such a remote corner of the globe.

All except those who have only recently come out from the homeland speak English perfectly, with

the exception of the letter "j," which many of them cannot help pronouncing like "y." The combination "th" is easily mastered by them.

Most of the settlers are just holding on to their land, waiting for the railways to come, only growing enough to keep themselves going with the help of a few poultry. Very few of them could be accused of doing much work.

Last time I was at Quatsino there was a new schoolma'am recently out from England. She was being chaffed mercilessly about everything English; the Canadians make a great point of that with all new-comers. If they get nasty then they are in for a pretty bad time, but if they take the chaff in good part they soon become acclimatized, and pass from the cheechahko stage to that of an old hand.

This schoolma'am was so particularly sweet-tempered that they chaffed her more than ever, just for the fun of it, but she had already won the heart of every one in the place. She sometimes had very amusing experiences through not knowing the Canadian colloquialisms, which abound in ordinary conversation, and her English accent sounded strange out there. Many English girls go out as school-teachers, but they don't usually teach school very long; they are seldom out for six months before they get married, and this one will certainly prove no exception.

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Near the entrance to the Narrows is the Indian village, a picturesque row of houses along the water-front, some with weird devices painted on them, others with totem poles in front. On the front of one house, rather larger than the rest, among other

PAINTED HOUSE.

NATIVE GRAVES.

CHIEF'S HOUSE, QUATSINO.

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ornamentations is the white figurehead of a ship, the usual conventional female figure. Was it a piece of wreckage washed up on the shore after some storm, or was it a trophy carried off in battle? Possibly some ship exploring this coast may have been driven by a storm against the rocks outside. If she had been able to make the entrance of the Sound she would have been safe in any weather. If any of the crew survived, they may have spent weary years in slavery at Quatsino afterwards. Who knows?

I couldn't find any one who had any knowledge of the origin of this figurehead, which gazes silently across the Sound with such a fixed, inscrutable smile, a veritable Sphinx, jealously guarding its secret.

But this white man's totem, set up amidst those of the red men, conveys a message to us, a message from those brave men who met a watery grave, or worse, thirty, fifty, perhaps a hundred or more years ago. They lost their lives, but their sacrifice was not in vain, their labour was not lost. The work they helped to do has been carried on, until now, after all its weary years of solitary vigil, with its message of hope locked up in its breast, the only white thing in the Sound, surrounded by the totems of the red men, the White Totem can at last gaze out over the Sound in quiet content, for it is gazing upon a white man's country.

The whole of Vancouver Island has for many years been part of the British Empire, but it is only within comparatively recent years that Quatsino has become a settlement.

Fifty years hence possibly the Indian Reserva-

tion will have been shifted farther away, to make room for the growing city of Quatsino, and the white totem will adorn a public park. Let us hope it will be treated with the honour it deserves.

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All the Indians except a few old men and women are employed at the cannery, fifteen miles down the Sound; when I visited the village there was scarcely a soul to be seen, but it was there that I came across the one and only *klootch* I have met who didn't object to having her photograph taken. Generally it is necessary to use a reflecting view finder, and take them unawares, under which conditions it is difficult to get a good picture, but this dear old lady not only did not object, but was highly delighted at the prospect of having her picture taken, and her great anxiety was as to whether her hair and dress were *kloshe*.

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The trip along the West Coast of the Island is one which is not usually taken for pleasure; it is generally rough, often excessively so, the full swell of the Pacific beating against the wild, rocky coast. The fallacy that the Pacific is always calm is somewhat dispelled when one learns that at the lighthouse on Triangle Island, off the north-western extremity of Vancouver Island, the average wind throughout the year blows at forty miles an hour, and that hundred-mile gales are of frequent occurrence.

The old *Tees*, which was running up there at the time of my last trip, left much to be desired, being small, and designed more for the accommodation of freight than passengers, but now there is

a fine new boat on the run, so a West Coast trip will be much more pleasant.

But, for one who doesn't mind a bit of weather, the trip on the *Tees* was most enjoyable, provided she was not crowded. It is not always rough; once I made the trip with the sea like a millpond.

We have to keep well out from the coast on account of the multitude of reefs extending for miles out from the shore, some entirely submerged, some visible at low water. In places jagged black rocks stand up out of the water three or four miles from the land. It is a glorious sight to see the breakers on the reefs, and the waves dashing against the exposed rocks, throwing great masses of spray a hundred feet up into the air. Particularly by moonlight the scene is enchanting. But it is not a place in which one would care to be in a small boat, driven before the wind!

There are many deep inlets in this coast, and a portion of the trip is through inland channels. The trip between Quatsino and Victoria takes three days, the passage being so circuitous, and the calls numerous, at canneries, mining and other settlements, with jaw-breaking Indian names—Ahateset, Ucluelet, Clayoquot (pron. Clahquot), Uchucklesit, and so on.

One of the largest Indian villages is Nootka, famous for the beautiful baskets which the natives used to make, and also as being the last place at which Captain Cook landed before setting out on the voyage during the course of which he met his death, being killed in a fight with natives in the Sandwich Islands. On a little islet close to the

village there is a monument erected to his memory. It was here that the first permanent white settlement was established in all of what is now British Columbia. That was in 1788. In the following year it was seized by a party of Spaniards, an act which very nearly caused a war between England and Spain. There have been some interesting doings on this remote coast!

Then there is the trip up the long, narrow Alberni Canal to the port of that name, down again, and into the wireless station at Bamfield, out into the open sea again, past beautiful sandy beaches, which will make splendid watering-places when they are rendered get-at-able, and then into the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the light of Cape Flattery visible in the distance, and in the morning we finish up in the tiny harbour of dear old Victoria once more.

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CHAPTER IV

BEAR RIVER

A TRIP up into the interior is always a thing to be looked forward to, and to be remembered afterwards with keen delight; the hardships and dangers are forgotten, and the pure joy of the glorious freedom of travelling and sojourning in a virgin land is alone thought of. The open-air life, the vastness of the country, the endless forests, the perilous journeys on strange rivers, the wild denizens of the woods, the mysterious, silent mountains, the superb views opening up unexpectedly, the very dangers encountered—all these have a fascination totally unknown to those whose travels are confined to inhabited countries.

What a delightful sense of freedom there is in the feeling that one can travel as far as one wants in any direction and choose a camping-ground on some grassy meadow, with pleasant, sheltering trees, and a babbling streamlet flowing by, without the fear of being turned off the ground as a trespasser! And then to repeat the process indefinitely, exploring new country every day, going where few white men have been, where cariboo and moose and bear still roam undisturbed!

The place at which you turn your back on all forms of public conveyance and arrange your own

transportation is known in the parlance of the country as your "jumping-off place," a most expressive term.

The Bear River in question [1] (for there are many Bear Rivers in British Columbia) has its source near Barkerville, the old metropolis of the Cariboo, but it passes at one point within a little over forty miles of Fort George, and it was not very far from that point that we were going, so the question was, whether Barkerville or Fort George was to be our jumping-off place. A party of surveyors from Fort George were going out to make a survey of the ground for us, so we decided to make for that place and travel with them.

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The trip up the C.P.R. through the Fraser River Cañon to Lytton I have already described to you. At Lytton the railway leaves the Fraser and follows up the Thompson, itself a river of fair size.

On emerging from the Coast Range we have entered the "dry belt," a strip of country between the Coast Range and the Selkirks, where the rainfall is so small that it presents quite a desert appearance; there is no grass, only dry, cracked earth and sage-brush. Rather a change from the luxuriant forest growth of the coast and its heavy rainfall! One would think that one had been suddenly transplanted by some magical process to Colorado or Mexico, the scenery seems so utterly different from that of our northern latitudes!

But no, there is still the construction work of the Canadian Northern on the other side of the Thompson, paralleling the C.P.R. At one place

[1] This one has since been re-named Bowron River.

the bare face of a mountain that has been cut into by the river rises two thousand feet up, one continuous rock-slide the whole way. What a place to carry a railway across! What a place to carry even a survey line across! I once travelled up to Kamloops with a surveyor who had missed his footing on one of these slides, and had been carried down, utterly helpless, for six hundred feet among a mass of sliding fragments of rock with gradually increasing speed until he reached the river below. He kept hold of his transit and saved it, and by a miracle he himself escaped with no broken bones, but his nerves were so shaken that, even after spending a year on leave, he couldn't face work in such a place again, and no wonder!

When one sees the place before the railway is built one can realize to some extent the difficulties that have to be contended with; when we travel in the comfortable coaches we are rather inclined to forget all this, to forget about the men who have risked their lives, the many who have sacrificed their lives, that we might travel in safety and comfort. The little wayside crosses are never seen by the ordinary traveller, their very existence is ignored, but each of them has a tale to tell, each of them represents a life suddenly cut short in its prime by one or other of the many dangers which are being faced every day by these pioneers.

The labourers employed in the railway construction work come from all over Europe and North America; many of them speak strange, outlandish tongues, and understand scarcely any English. Many of the accidents are due to this very cause,

men failing to understand their orders and disobeying them in consequence. "It was his own fault," one hears; "the foreman took all possible precautions, but he was naturally stupid, and acted flatly against orders, and so met his death." But think of the other side of the case: a rough, uneducated, hardy son of toil, recently out from his home somewhere away in the backwoods of Austria, nine thousand miles from every earthly tie, in a strange land, among people who speak a strange language. One cannot but admire his pluck. If he did disobey orders it was because he didn't understand them; if he was stupid, it was not his fault that he was not born clever. Let us remember that he faced the danger and died the death of a hero, unknown and far from home, and let us sometimes think of the significance of these little crosses as we pass along in the comfortable cars!

At intervals along the Thompson River we see ferries by means of which materials are carried across from the supply depots on the near side. The construction camps, too, are mostly on this side; there is no room on the other.

The rocks through which the river is cut sometimes assume weird and fantastic shapes; the schist is cut through by many hard dikes, which stand out in the river, forming grotesque figures.

Tea is served in the observation car. It is amusing to see all the Englishmen taking their afternoon tea. You seldom see ladies indulging in that luxury unless they are from the Old Country too.

The true Canadian will not look at it, and it is really quite unnecessary when one dines at six or

A FREIGHT TRAIN ON THE CARIBOO ROAD.

THE MAIL COACH.

THE CHASM.

141 MILE HOUSE.

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half-past, although it forms an agreeable variety in the afternoon.

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Ashcroft is reached about 5.30, and here we have to spend the night. There are two hotels, for it is an important point, being the jumping-off place, as far as the railway is concerned, for the great interior, which is reached over the famous Cariboo road. The town consists of one long street and three or four abortive attempts at cross-streets, a most uninteresting place, surrounded by desert sage-brush country. This sage-brush country, however, only needs irrigation to become most fertile. Although few are seen from the railway, there are numerous ranches all round, and Ashcroft potatoes are famous throughout the West.

The valley here is about half a mile wide, with rounded hills on either side. A good road leads to Clinton, thirty-five miles away, where the Cariboo road is joined, and this is the great highway to the north. The old horse-stage leaves at 4 a.m., travelling till 10 p.m., and reaching Soda Creek late on the second night, but for the last few years there have been auto-stages for the conveyance of passengers, whose baggage is sent on with the mail in the horse-stage, thereby enabling the passengers to start at the more Christian hour of eight each morning, and to stop at a decent time in the evening, depending upon how many breakdowns there have been and what progress has been made. Thus Soda Creek is reached some time on the second day with more or less comfort.

During the spring and summer there is a constant stream of traffic going in over the road—families

going in to take up land, with all their earthly belongings piled up on wagons, driving their cattle; men going in fortune-hunting, getting a lift occasionally, but footing it most of the way; heavily laden wagons with provisions and supplies of all kinds for Fort George and other points in the interior; but this will not be for much longer, for the Grand Trunk Pacific will soon be running trains into Fort George, and then the glory of the Cariboo road will have departed.[1]

From Soda Creek a steamer takes us up the Fraser to Fort George in two more days. The trip, which is thus accomplished by stage and steamer in four days, takes five or six weeks for the heavy freight trains, long caravans of wagons, each drawn by six, eight, or even up to sixteen strong horses. Frequently two or three wagons are hitched together; this is generally the case when they are returning light. These empty trains returning are met all along the road.

The high, narrow wagons, with their high hoops, covered over with canvas, present a strange appearance when seen for the first time, reminding one of pictures of wagon trains crossing the desert to California in the old days. They are much more picturesque than the wagons in South Africa. This method of travel must have continued in vogue for untold thousands of years with little change; one can imagine the Israelites trekking out of Egypt with such freight trains to carry their belongings.

One frequently sees women driving, for among the ranchers in the West the women are no merely ornamental adjuncts.

[1] This line was opened through to the coast in 1914.

Leaving Ashcroft, we climb up out of the Thompson Valley and follow at a considerable elevation the valley of the Bonaparte River, which is first seen at an immense distance below us.

The sage-brush country is soon left behind; as we get higher up first bunch-grass appears, and then we come into the region of the bull-pine, a most picturesque tree with rough orange-yellow bark and large tufts of needles. Then, still higher, we get a variety of forest trees growing in places quite thick, fir, black pine (known as jack-pine), spruce, and other varieties.

We pass numerous ranches, and every few miles along the road is a "road-house" where travellers can get meals and sleeping accommodation. These are designated by their distance from the starting-point, and as Lillooet, and not Ashcroft, was the starting-point for the interior in the old days, after we pass Clinton and get on to the Cariboo road proper, the names of the road-houses refer to their distance from Lillooet, which is eleven miles more than that from Ashcroft. Thus the famous 150 Mile House is only 139 miles from Ashcroft.

The road is very dusty; the cylinders get overheated and the cooling water boils; we have to stop frequently to change it and let the engine cool down. The bearings also get very hot; the chauffeur talks about dust in the lubricating oil. Under these circumstances progress is slow, and it is one o'clock when we come to sleepy little Clinton, only thirty-five miles from Ashcroft. The little village lies in a wide, flat valley, surrounded by beautiful green fields, an idyllic scene; it might be some quiet little Old Country village. Next to

us at lunch sits the new schoolma'am ; she is from the Old Country and has only been out here a fortnight ; it is all new and strange to her, and intensely interesting.

Not far from the Fifty-three Mile House is the Chasm, an immense cañon with no stream running through it and ending abruptly, a curious geological freak. The road passes close to its side, and at one point the auto is stopped for the passengers to approach the brink and gaze down into the vast gorge. Close by is a tiny little frame building with a board over the door bearing the legend "Chasm School." One wonders where the children come from to attend school in such a place. But there are ranches even here, and in Canada children think nothing of a four- or five-mile walk to school.

A telephone line extends all along the road, so that meals and sleeping accommodation can be arranged for ahead, as soon as the driver knows which of the numerous road-houses he will be able to reach. And excellent meals are served too : lots of fresh vegetables—no more of the canned goods that we get in the cities, but the real thing straight from the garden. Some of the road-houses are very picturesque, reminding one of old English farm-houses. Nearly all of them have a luxuriant growth of hops creeping all over the front, which materially adds to the picturesque effect, and some of them have charming little flower-gardens with a brilliant display of colour.

Most of the country traversed is splendid agricultural land, though possibly a bit dry in places, but nothing is grown now except just sufficient to supply the occupants and the travellers along the

road with food for themselves and their horses. With the enormous distance to the nearest market nothing can be shipped. But a railway is soon to be built up the Fraser Valley to Fort George, and then this rich country will be within reach of transportation.

A great deal of work has been done on the road recently, and it is now quite a fair road to go over with an auto. The higher ground, 2,000 to 2,500 feet above sea-level, is mostly open grazing land, dotted with trees here and there. A number of lakes occur, one of them, Lac La Hache, being skirted by the road for its whole length, some fifteen miles. At the side of the lake is the ranch known as the 115 Mile House, and here we spend the night; it is a quaint, old-fashioned house. Never will my companion forget the excellent supper they gave us; the Lac La Hache trout will live in his memory till his dying day. And such a fresh, simple meal one enjoys more than all the epicurean feasts of the cities.

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Some time on the second day the 150 Mile House is reached. This is quite a village, with a road-house which is almost a hotel, a police-station, school, and several stores and residences. Here two roads branch off, that to the right going to Quesnelle Forks and the southern part of the Cariboo district, that to the left crossing the Fraser by a ferry and following the Chilcotin River up to Hanceville. On each of these roads there is also a stage service, but only once a week.

We keep straight on, climbing up a steep hill away from the 150 Mile House, over more high

ground, timbered with jack-pine, poplar, birch, and many other trees, till we descend into the beautiful valley of Deep Creek, in which are several prosperous-looking ranches. As we get nearer the Fraser, however, the road rises up on to the higher ground to the right, and when we finally see the great valley of the Fraser open out before us the river lies at a depth of some fifteen hundred feet below us. The old road continues along the high ground alongside the valley towards Quesnelle, or Quesnel as it is now generally written, but we have to descend into the valley here at Soda Creek by a steep, zigzag road.

In the valley of Deep Creek, and indeed over the greater portion of the road, a peculiar feature of the scenery has been the number of forked pine-trees, the trunk being forked generally twenty or thirty feet from the ground, and the two limbs diverging at a slight angle and forming a twin tree. This peculiarity is also to be seen in fir-trees occasionally.

At Soda Creek we get on board the sternwheel steamer *B.X.*, which name is the popular abbreviation of the B.C. Express Company, which runs the stages and steamers, and make ourselves comfortable for the night. It is a distinct relief after two days' bumping over a dusty road to sit down in a comfortable little steamer.

Starting in the small hours the following morning, the trip up the 150 miles to Fort George is made in two days, tying up during the night.

As far as Quesnel the journey is uneventful, but beyond that two cañons have to be passed through, which lends excitement to the trip.

IN FORT GEORGE CAÑON.

HEADWATERS OF BEAR RIVER.

To face p. 120.

Quesnel looks quite a cheerful little town, fronting on the river, with its two large and attractive-looking hotels. It all looks quite modern and new; it is only when one gets away from the "town centre" that one comes across relics of the old days in the shape of substantial log cabins and houses. All the recent buildings are of sawn lumber, much smarter in appearance, but not nearly so serviceable in winter, for here it goes to fifty below, and then you want a good thick wall to keep in the heat. A lumber-mill near the wharf gives an appearance of industry to the scene.

The Quesnelle River joins the Fraser just below the town. Just beyond it, on the bank of the Fraser, is a peculiar bright red cliff. This is due to a seam of lignite having burnt, and converted the overlying clay beds into hard brick, a phenomenon not uncommon in this country.

A few miles above Quesnel two groups of earth pinnacles stand out on the left side of the river, about three hundred feet above the water, presenting in the distance the appearance of ruined castles; one might almost imagine that one was travelling on the Rhine instead of the Fraser.

Then we come to Cottonwood Cañon, not a regular cañon, but a series of gorges through which the water rushes and swirls in eddies, forming a ticklish piece to navigate.

Photographs can give no idea of the appearance of these cañons, the movement of the water is lacking; one must pass through them oneself in order to realize the excitement of it, and to appreciate the masterly skill exercised in navigating the steamer.

They say it is not the cañons that are really the most difficult and dangerous, but some of the bars, particularly China Bar, which stretches almost the whole way across the river, leaving only a narrow passage deep enough for the steamer to pass. This boat draws only two feet of water, and none of the others much more, being wide and flat-bottomed, but it is quite a common occurrence to go aground, and it is not always a very easy job to get off again, with a strong current forcing you against the bar. But the boats are commanded by men, generally half-breeds, who have been born and bred on the river, and understand all its ways.

The great incident of the trip is the passage through Fort George Cañon, some twenty miles below Fort George. A great deal of work has been done in blasting rocks so as to render it navigable, but it is still so risky that the steamers are not licensed to carry passengers through it, so we have to land and travel three-quarters of a mile on foot, catching a glimpse now and then from between the trees and rocks of the steamer struggling through. At about the worst point she has to make a sharp turn, almost a right angle, surrounded on all sides by ugly-looking rocks, sharp and jagged, some rising high out of the water, some submerged, their presence only indicated by the furious whirlpools and eddies in the water. In the passage which the steamer has just entered the water is pouring down between the rocks as if it were coming over a weir; there must be a sudden fall of at least two feet in the level of the water there. It seems incredible that a ship can get through

there against the stream at all. But she is skilfully manipulated, and gets through without a hitch, and we get on board once more.

Presently there is a rush to the port side of the deck. What appears to be a big black dog is running along the shore, and everybody is watching him. He has been drinking in the river, and has been scared by the approach of the steamer. Suddenly two shots ring out, but without effect, and the young bear, for such it is, disappears into the bush.

* * * * *

At length Fort George is reached. There are two Fort Georges, South and Central, and never was there greater rivalry between two town sites. This is South where we are; Central is three miles farther up, on the right bank of the Nechaco, which joins the Fraser here.

Each town consists of a number of frame houses and a vast amount of real estate, and each claims to be *the* city of the future! A great deal depends on the location of the railway-station; central is in the better position with regard to the railway, but South has much the best water-front. It will probably not be very long before the two are united, for Fort George is so situated geographically that it cannot help becoming the distributing centre for that vast area comprised under the designation of Central British Columbia, and, surrounded as it is by extensive valleys, it will, before many decades are over, be quite a metropolis, with railways radiating in all directions.

On arriving we learned that our surveyors had already left, but, instead of going in across country from here, they had gone to Barkerville, and were

now engaged in building boats on Lesser Bear Lake, at the head of Bear River, in which to make the trip down to the property in question. So we decided to retrace our steps, so to speak—that is, to return on the good ship *B.X.* through Fort George and Cottonwood cañons as far as Quesnel, from which point we could take the stage over the fifty miles up to Barkerville in time to catch up with the survey party before they finished building the boats.

We had to stop a night in the comfortable Occidental Hotel in Quesnel. Among the guests were a very young couple, a mere boy and girl, who had eloped, we were told, from somewhere in Dakota or Nebraska, and had come up to this remote place in the hope of escaping pursuit. Like most such couples, they had no means, and the kindly hotel proprietor had given the young fellow some work in some alterations he was having done. Such boy-and-girl elopements are frequent in the States, but they must often have a pretty hard time after the original supply of cash runs out.

The stage left for Barkerville in the afternoon. We had one fellow-passenger, a young Scotsman who came armed with a bottle, not yet having recovered from the "spree" upon which he had been for the last couple of days. He had quit a job in Quesnel simply because he had a roaming fit, and was going to Barkerville for no apparent reason, having decided to board the stage only at the very last moment.

He regaled us with songs and anecdotes of various escapades which betrayed his near relationship with the family of Münchausen. At

intervals he slept, much to our relief, although sometimes, on going round sharp turns, he very nearly fell out of the stage.

The drive is interesting; twenty miles out we come to the settlement of Cottonwood, a little old-world village, where we stop for the night. The road-house is old-fashioned and comfortable. The proprietors, two brothers, are full of tales of the old times, handed down to them from their parents, for they have been born and bred here. They have many samples of gold-dust and some tidy nuggets to show us.

In the morning we continue our journey. Sandy has a very sore head, and needs many pulls at the bottle to keep up his spirits; he feels very sorry for himself, and is pessimistic about everything in general all the morning, but later on he recovers his spirits.

At one point we approach the edge of a deep chasm, and far below we see a little river. It is Lightning Creek, famous in the old Cariboo days. Later on we descend into the valley and pass through Van Winkle, or Stanley as it is now sometimes called. It might be a sleepy little English village, except that all the houses are built of wood. There is a gold-mine here which has been working quite recently. After whom the village was named I failed to discover; one cannot help connecting it with the famous Rip of that ilk.

But the most picturesque and interesting part of the trip is in the last twenty miles; after leaving Van Winkle the road rises rapidly, and we leave the valley of Lightning Creek and go over the divide through what has been well named the

Devil's Pass. The scenery is superb; the road skirts along an almost vertical cliff; it makes one dizzy to look at the foaming river away below, and on negotiating some of the sharp bends one's heart is usually in the vicinity of one's mouth as the stage dashes round with the outer wheels high in the air. For Sandy has been sitting on the front seat with the driver, who has been taking an occasional look at the bottle for sociability's sake, and is now showing what he can do in the way of handling his team. He certainly can handle it magnificently, in spite of his recklessness.

It is with a distinct feeling of relief that we come out into the open valley and are on comparatively level ground once more. Then we come to Jack of Clubs Lake, which we skirt for a few miles, and then across a fertile piece of meadow-land to Barkerville, which we enter at a gallop in great form.

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Barkerville is at a height of 4,500 feet above the sea, and the climate is delightful in summer, though somewhat severe in winter. The one street which forms the town has a quaint, old-fashioned appearance. The valley above is narrow, and the tailings from the mining operations higher up have run down right through the town, the creek being almost at the back doors of the houses on one side. The accumulation of material has been so great that the houses have had to be raised periodically, until now some of them are said to be thirty feet above their original level. The result, as may be imagined, is an irregular, jumbled up mass of tumbledown buildings.

The traveller is regaled with tales of the old days, when fortunes were made in a single day, and lost as quickly, when a cup of coffee cost two bits (which, being translated, is twenty-five cents) and a pie two dollars and a half. A piano was brought in before the Cariboo road was made; it had to be taken to pieces and packed on men's backs, but a lady desired it and it came—such was the luxury of those days! History does not relate what sort of sounds came out of it after its long transport in sections. Some pictures are preserved in the hotel which also date from that time, and were packed in on men's backs. They are considered great works of art, but what they represent, and by whom they were painted, I have forgotten.

Nuggets and gold-dust are of course produced to be duly admired. The latter was the currency in the old days here as in all gold camps; a man going into a store to buy anything produced his pouch of dust, and the merchant weighed out the requisite amount on his scales, throwing back the pouch across the counter. Woe to the storekeeper who should be convicted of having falsified his scales!

It seems strange to think that this is the second decade of the twentieth century; one would think rather that we had been translated back into the middle of the nineteenth. Barkerville seems to have no connection with the new order of things; it is quite an anomaly to see public notices bearing the letters G.R.—surely that must refer to George IV! And there are even children here; it is strange to see real live twentieth-century children in 1860, for surely it can never be more than 1860 in Barkerville!

When one is familiar with the Old World, with European and Egyptian antiquities, it seems ludicrous to speak of last century as long ago: why, we lived a good many years in it ourselves, it is only a matter of yesterday. But the very fact that it is so recent makes one appreciate its antiquity all the more. To think that men now living actually took part in that gold rush long ago, tramped up those 450 miles into an unknown land from the little town of New Westminster; to think that half a century ago this place was like what the Klondike has been within recent years, and that it has simply been asleep ever since, while the outside world has been going ahead; that Vancouver has come into existence and grown to be a great city while Barkerville has slept! One cannot help thinking that one has slipped back into the past, and that the twentieth century, with its automobiles and aeroplanes, is only a dream.

Fancy any one choosing Barkerville to be born in! I know a lady in Vancouver, not by any means elderly, who made this extraordinary choice. She used to come down to school in New Westminster, 450 miles in the stage, travelling day after day over that famous old road, through the Fraser River Cañon and all—for there was no C.P.R. in those days. Just think of a young girl undertaking such a journey each time she went home for the holidays.

But a Canadian girl is able to look after herself, and if she has been brought up in the country she can walk or ride or climb with the best, and be none the less womanly and charming for it either.

* * * * *

At the hotel one of our survey party turns up,

ON BEAR RIVER.

BUILDING BOATS.

Facing p. 128.

and we go out with him to Bear Lake next morning, tramping the twenty miles, while our dunnage is carried by a couple of horses.

Bear Lake is a delightful spot, considerably lower than Barkerville, and there are a couple of ranches alongside Bear River where it issues from the lake. When there is a railway to Barkerville this part will soon be well settled. The view from the lake looking down the river is one of passing beauty. The country round the lake is thickly timbered with fir, spruce, balsam, jack-pine, and on the lower ground alongside the river the dark green of the conifers is relieved by masses of elegant birches and poplars. Some of these have already turned colour, for September is well advanced, and these form patches of brilliant golden yellow, which, with the dark green all round, the blue sky above, and the whole reflected in the smooth surface of the water beneath, completes a picture of exquisite delicacy.

Our survey party consists of four—Dan, the boss, Walter, Tom, and Happy, with Homer, the French-Canadian cook, and four natives who are to be the axemen, not to mention Happy's little retriever pup, Tootsie. The natives are now building three flat-bottomed boats of whip-sawn lumber under the direction of the white men. It is a couple of days before the boats are ready, and during this interval we have a look round the place and collect resin from the balsams and firs to caulk the boats with.

A large party of surveyors went down the river a week before; while we are there their chief, Mr. Pearson, and another man arrive on foot from the rapids forty miles below. One of their boats

has capsized in the rapids and a man been drowned. He was carried down by the current into a deep pool and his body has not been seen. Such is the risk of travelling in this way, and it doesn't exactly tend to encourage us to start out!

However, the boats are completed in due course, and when we feel how well they ride in the stream, and how masterfully not only the natives but the surveyors also handle them, our misgivings begin to disappear, and we start off gaily down the river. All is plain sailing on the first day, and we camp that night thirty miles down, after an enjoyable day. On the morning of the second day we reach the first rapids, and here our boatmen's skill shows itself. These Indians from Fort George have been born and bred on these rivers, and know all there is to be known about handling a boat or canoe. In the calm places the paddles are used, but wherever the water is shallow and rapid the poles are in requisition, and it is wonderful how they will suddenly bring the boat to a standstill and hold it in the midst of rushing water, the captain at the stern and the mate in the bow. The passenger in the middle of the boat also gives what help he can with his pole. Then, when the passage has been decided upon the boat is perhaps poled back against the stream for some distance, and diverted into the required channel.

Now and then they get out and wade, guiding the boat in the way it should go in shallow places among the rocks; it is a masterful piece of work, this handling of a fragile boat among the turbulent waters. At one place the "passengers" are landed on a long island, and walk down half a mile while

the boats are skilfully guided down the shallow, rock-strewn channel.

At the rapids the water is boiling over the rocks ; it needs a skilled boatman to see the channel and follow it. If the boat were to swing round and dash its side against a rock it would be all up with it in a moment. If she commences to swing round, and cannot be held by the poles, there is only one thing to do, and that is to jump out and hold her. There is no time for thought ; action must be instinctive or it will be too late. That is where a novice is so utterly useless ; while he wastes a second in thinking what to do, the damage is done and the boat is lost. That is undoubtedly what happened in the case of Mr. Pearson's party ; most of them were men entirely unacquainted with rivercraft, and it is not surprising that they had several mishaps, fortunately without loss of life except in that one case.

But, thanks to our expert boatmen, we get through with no mishap, and presently we find ourselves in a deep, dark cañon where the water is black and deep. And just below the other party is encamped, for in this pool lies that poor fellow's body. We have passed the dreaded place, and camp that night with lighter hearts, although we can't help thinking sometimes of the man who started down the river a few days ago so gaily, and whose earthly remains now lie at the bottom of that black pool.

Next day travelling is easier, the river is getting bigger, but there are still many shallow bars to cross, and some ticklish places among the boulders. On rounding a bend a fine cow moose is seen standing in the river, peacefully drinking, a beautiful

sight. Our paddles are stopped, and as the wind is in the opposite direction, we are able to approach within seventy yards of her before she is aware of our presence. Then a rifle shot rings out, and the magnificent beast staggers towards the shore, but falls before she can reach it. That majestic denizen of the forest, roaming wild and free throughout the land, rejoicing in stupendous strength and superb beauty, filled with the vigour and the joy of life, doing harm to none, is now nothing but a carcass, merely so much meat—for, as it is a cow, the slayer has not even the satisfaction of taking home a pair of antlers as a trophy. It is a pitiful scene; even the man who did the deed is smitten with remorse at the sight of that poor dead carcass, the heart scarcely stopped! Why is it that man must bring death wherever he goes? It is surely not a thing for the lord of creation to be proud of.

The work of skinning and cutting up the meat does not take long; the natives are experts at it and thoroughly enjoy the job. All the rest of the day they are thinking of the savoury stew they will have for supper, and for many days ahead.

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That same afternoon we reach our destination, having covered the eighty miles from Bear Lake in three days, and we choose a good level spot close to the river bank, on a flat heavily timbered with poplar, clear away the underbrush and pitch our tents. We have two tents, one for the four surveyors and a smaller one for my companion and myself, besides the cook-tent which Homer occupies together with his sheet-iron cook-stove and all the provisions. The natives have a tent, but have not yet pitched

it. There are no hemlocks to be seen in the country, with the branches of which to make our beds, so we do the best we can with spruce, and lay out a fairly soft bed on which to put our blankets.

The headman of the natives has been getting a bit fresh for some time, and there is a dispute between Dan and him over some matter of discipline. After supper the four natives get into one of the boats, in which their blankets happen to have been placed, and go off to shoot a beaver. The evening passes and they do not return, and the fact is borne in upon us that they have gone for good. They can get down the river to the Fraser, and thence to Fort George, some 150 miles, in three or four days, and having a gun they can always get food. Their desertion has serious consequences for us; we have only two boats now, but the most serious thing is that the surveyors will have to do their own axe work, and the survey, instead of being completed in three weeks, will more likely take six, and it is already close on the end of September.

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We stay ten days in this camp, for there is much country to be covered, and the surveyors work hard. It is easy country to travel through, timbered with poplar on the river flats, sometimes a great cottonwood with its rich grey bark; on the slopes skirting the river it is nearly all spruce. This is hard to get through, for the low branches bend down and form an almost impenetrable network. Then on the benches, a hundred feet or more above the level of the river, we have mostly jack-pine spaced at

such intervals that travelling is as easy as in the open. As the hills are reached we get larger timber, but none very large, black pine, fir, cedar, the latter really being an arbor vitæ, more akin to cypress than cedar, but known universally as cedar in the West.

Sometimes on the river flats we get into a willow patch; then it is a case of making our way through as best we can; it takes longer to cut a hundred yards of survey line through this than half a mile through the timber.

It is easy to lose one's way if one goes out of sight and out of hearing of the river. To blaze a trail with an axe is a laborious process if one has many miles to go. On a bright day one can always steer by the sun, but when it is cloudy a compass is absolutely essential. At night the stars can seldom be seen in the timber, and to lose one's way after dark is a serious matter; if any one of the party fails to reach camp before it is dark, a rifle is fired at intervals to guide him.

Now and then a patch of meadow is unexpectedly entered; it is generally more or less swampy, and sometimes a little lake is suddenly encountered. Most of these lakes, and indeed many of the swamps, are artificial. No human hands have brought them into being, but they are due to the tireless industry of skilful engineers all the same. At the point where the stream flows out of one of these lakes one finds a beautifully constructed dam, made of logs and sticks of all sizes, covered with brush and plastered with mud. Some of these dams are six or seven feet high and several hundred feet in length, of perfect workmanship. They are, of

course, built by those marvellous creatures the beavers.

And the trees that those little animals fell it is wonderful to see. On some of the poplar flats the ground is strewn with felled trees, sixty to ninety feet in length, some of them eighteen inches through at the butt; I have seen a tree two feet six in diameter in process of being cut through. After being felled the smaller portion of the trunk is cut up into sections, three or four feet long, the larger branches being similarly treated, and these logs are taken to the river and floated down to the place where they are required. One could hardly credit it unless one had the ocular evidence.

The beaver never work by day, it is always at dead of night. Homer used frequently to hear them working behind the cook-tent during the small hours of the morning.

One naturally inquires, What is the object of all this industry? Why should they want to cut down trees and build dams at all?

It is to maintain the height of the water in their "houses." The entrance to the house is always under water, but as they are air-breathing animals the living-rooms have to be above water, so that it is necessary to keep the level of the water constant. This is obviously impossible in a creek whose height varies with the season and with the rainfall, hence the dams and artificial lakes. It is a wonderful chapter in the book of Nature.

There are lots of musk rats in these lakes too. They may frequently be seen swimming about, always busy over something or other. They bear too strong a family resemblance to the ordinary

house rat to be very pleasing to look at, but their fur is much prized; both they and the beaver are trapped for their fur.

There is any amount of game in the forest, tracks are seen everywhere, especially where there is a sand beach on the edge of the river. Deer, cariboo, moose, and bear tracks in profusion, but they keep well out of our way. Only on one occasion a magnificent bull moose crosses the river a hundred and fifty yards from where we are and disappears among the brush. It is wonderful how they can get through the thick under-brush with their great antlers, but they seem to have no difficulty at all.

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The surveyors work hard to get the job through, and, having finished the examination of the locality,[1] my friend and I give them a hand for the last few days. Sometimes we have to cross the river, which is no joke; the water is icy cold and the current is very strong, and even at the shallowest places there is generally a channel where one has to wade up to one's waist. The round stones are slippery, and even with the aid of a stout pole it is no easy matter to retain one's foothold.

Sunday is a day of rest in camp—that is, more or less rest, for the weekly washing is done during the morning. A shave is also indulged in by those who wish to feel really respectable during the coming week, and one takes the nearest approach to a bath that is possible in the icy water of the river. But the afternoon is generally spent reading and slacking generally. And the rest is well earned.

The preparation of fuel for the camp is no small

[1] A very promising coal property.

item ; every few days a tree is felled, preferably a fir, spruce, or balsam, on account of the resin they contain, and logs are sawn off it as required. A fire is built in front of each tent as it is cold in the evenings. Two upright stakes support three or four large logs piled one on the other, four or five feet long. The stakes are of green timber so as not to burn away too quickly. This form of fire throws the heat out into the tent, giving a very cheerful warmth.

In front of the cook tent there is a "fly" under which a table is rigged up for having our meals on. Both table and seats are made out of boards which form the false bottoms in the boats.

Homer is an excellent cook and we fare sumptuously ; you should see the stacks of hot cakes disappear at breakfast ! He makes real yeast bread in his little oven, which is a great improvement on the baking-powder bread used in camps of a less elaborate nature.

We have to shift camp twice before the whole area is covered, the last camp being in a poor place where the ground is all swampy and covered with moss, but it is frozen now, for October is drawing to a close and still the work is not finished. Each morning we have to thaw out our boots before we can get them on our feet, for they freeze as stiff as iron.

While we are in our second camp Mr. Pearson and his party pass down the river. They have been surveying pre-emptions up above, and are now going to do some farther down, in the neighbourhood of Greater Bear Lake.

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One morning I wake up about four o'clock, a

brilliant light shining in at the open door of the tent, which faces due east, and in the clear blue sky I see the full moon a little way above the horizon, shining straight into the tent. No, it can't be the moon, it is only about a third of the size of that orb. What, then, can it be—a clear silver white disc, the size of a teacup, shining with such a glorious radiance?

It can be no other than a planet, no doubt Venus, appearing in the east, heralding the sunrise; and indeed, observing it at intervals during the succeeding hours, it is seen gradually to diminish in size and brilliance as the dawn approaches until it has resumed its familiar aspect of a bright star. For several mornings in succession I am awakened by the radiance of this star in the east, and can now understand the significance of the planets to the ancients. Before, they had to me simply been bright stars. Now, this one at any rate is no longer a star, but a miniature moon, of exquisite beauty, a heavenly body different from any I have seen before or since.

About five feet from this radiant orb is a star with a distinct tail, quite nine inches long; it must be a comet, descending towards the eastern horizon at an angle of about forty-five degrees. It is a year since Halley's comet visited us, and I have not heard of any other such visitor due to arrive, but that star most certainly *has* a tail. I look again to make sure. Yes, it is there all right, there is no mistake about it.

In the morning I speak of it, and the following night my friend wakes and sees it too. It is not until we have returned to civilization that we

learn that Brooks' comet was visible in the east just at that time.

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Getting up one morning a strange sight meets our eyes. Instead of the usual clear water of the river we see white patches floating down; the ice has begun to run. When we go down to wash there is ice extending for six feet from the shore. It is time we were getting out of this with our boats, or the river may freeze on us, which would not be a joke.

A cold snap has come on; the thermometer registers somewhere in the neighbourhood of zero each morning for some days; it is unusually early for such a cold snap in this part of the country.

The surveying is continued under difficulties; it is no joke to work with a transit in zero weather; the lubricating oil freezes so that the instrument works stiffly; one dares not touch the cold metal with bare fingers or they would be severely burnt by the contact, and wearing thick gloves for such work is not conducive to ease of manipulation.

The temperature goes away below zero; the little thermometer in my aneroid only shows to eight below, so when that point is passed we cannot tell what the temperature is. We sleep with all our clothes on, and pile up the fires at night in front of our tents. The ice on the river is getting thicker; it extends for twenty feet out from each side now, and one can walk along on its surface close to the shore with safety. Travelling along the river bank is much facilitated by this.

The days are bright and sunny, and after ten o'clock it is delightfully warm in the sun, but the

clear sky every night adds to the ice on the river, and we pray for clouds, for snow, that the river may not completely freeze up, and at last one morning we wake with a pleasant warm feeling; the ground is white, snow is falling fast, we are saved! Tootsie has never seen snow before, and is wild with delight, capering about and throwing the snow up with her snout.

It is not so pleasant travelling in the snow, but the sky is overcast and remains so for some days, during which the mercury creeps back away above zero in the early morning, and well above freezing point during most of the day, so that the ice on the river rapidly decreases, and soon the water is clear again.

* * * * *

But the work is not finished yet, and the dull weather comes to an end. Once more it is bright and clear, and the ice forms again. Two more days see the work through, and now for a start before the ice becomes too bad!

The tents are struck, everything is packed up and the boats loaded. It is ten o'clock before we get off, and travelling is by no means easy. The water is low, and there is a coating of ice over all the rocks in the stream. The poles are immersed to their full length in the effort to get a good purchase, and come out dripping with water, which in a few seconds forms a coating of ice. After this has been repeated a number of times the pole becomes of unwieldy size, having a coating of ice half an inch thick all round. Our gloves get wet and freeze on the outside, so that we can get no grip at all on the poles, and we have to try and chip the ice

A BEAVER DAM.

THE DINING-ROOM.

To face p. 140.

off them every few minutes by knocking them on the side of the boat. The poles slip on the ice which covers all the rocks both above and below the surface of the water, and it is very difficult to guide the boats.

Time after time the boat becomes jammed among the rocks, and the longer it stays the more ice forms around it, cementing it to the rocks. Drift ice, coming down the river, collects wherever there is an obstacle and adds to the mass. We dare not get out and wade, or our feet would be frozen before we could get to the shore and make a fire, so we have to make frantic efforts with pole and paddle. At one place the boat I was in was stuck for over an hour. It was finally released by putting the cook-stove out into the stream, and a man standing on that managed to work the stern of the boat backwards and forwards until it came free. That was the last we saw of the cook-stove.

We frequently get jammed in large sheets of drift ice; at a narrow place the drift ice has completely closed the river for a length of some sixty yards. It is not more than fifteen yards across between the solid ice on each side, and the space is completely filled with a mass of soft, spongy ice, through which we have to cut our way with axes. Hard, solid ice would have been easy to cut through, but this stuff closes in on us almost as fast as we open a passage, and near the shore where the ice is hard it is too shallow to go.

Under such circumstances travelling is not rapid, and that evening we make camp, all thoroughly tired out, just six miles from where we started.

It is not an encouraging prospect for the 140-mile journey ahead of us!

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Next morning we start out, cold and miserable, and after an exhausting morning's work camp at midday half a mile farther down. A council of war is held, and it is decided to abandon the boats and strike across country for Fort George, which can only be about forty-eight miles away in a straight line, the river route being very circuitous.

The surveying instruments have, of course, to be left behind, as well as everything which is not absolutely essential for us to take; I have to leave my samples behind, but decide to take my cameras and other instruments, which make my pack a heavy one.

The tents are all left, and each man takes one blanket; I take a small blanket and the quilt out of my sleeping bag. We take enough food to last for six days at a pinch, as we count on reaching Fort George on the fourth day. Before leaving our last fixed camp Homer had baked a lot of bread for the journey, so we put rice, bacon, and bread into our packs. A little tea, a few prunes, and some cheese completes our supply. Of sugar and salt we have none, having run out of those commodities. Boiled rice without either salt or sugar is not very appetizing, but anything tastes good at twenty-four below zero! Being a vegetarian, I have not the variety that the others have in the bacon, but try to make up with cheese.

All our goods are left in a cache, resting on a platform erected between two trees about ten feet from the ground. They will be safe enough there,

and the surveyors will send for them as soon as there is enough snow to take dog-sleighs in. The boats are dragged up under the trees, turned over, and covered with brush, so as to protect them from the sun, otherwise they would crack when they dried out in the spring.

There we camp for the night, and in the morning off we start on our long tramp. It is not a cheerful prospect, but it is an immense relief to feel that there is no more poling in the icy river, no more of that heartbreaking jamming among the rocks.

The forest is very dense here; travelling is greatly impeded by the innumerable windfalls; climbing over, under, and between logs and stumps is not particularly easy at any time, but with a fifty-pound pack on your back it is distinctly difficult, especially when you are not at all used to packing. The pack has a way of catching somewhere after you are through, and you have to extricate it somehow, often having to slip the pack-straps off your shoulders before you can get it clear. It is not so bad at first, but towards the afternoon the pack gets very, very heavy, and these continual hitches are exceedingly trying.

We dare not stop to rest more than a minute or two at any time without lighting a fire, or we would be liable to get our faces or hands or feet frozen. Even while walking Dan got one of his big toes frozen; fortunately he suspected it from the lack of sensation, and on removing his boot, found the toe quite white and hard. A vigorous application of snow for half an hour brought the circulation back; it was taken in time, but how he must have suffered! The toe swelled up so that

he had to slit the boot, and turned purple. He limped all the rest of the way, in fact all the rest of that winter, as I afterwards heard, but his spirits never gave way ; he kept ahead with the compass, breaking the trail, singing merrily half the time.

Walter had both ears frozen, first one and then the other, but they were observed by others in time, and snow applied before they had become very bad. Another day Tom's nose went, but that was also taken in time.

It is fortunate that there is a little snow on the ground, not only on account of its use in the case of frozen limbs, but it also serves as a guide, those behind only having to follow the footprints of those ahead ; otherwise it would have been much more difficult to avoid losing each other, for each man just goes on at his own pace, making the best progress he can, only coming together when a halt is made and a fire lit for a few minutes' rest.

So the first day drags through, and it is an utterly weary and miserable party that camp that night near a little creek where there is running water under the ice. We have covered about twelve miles, and they have been twelve hard miles too ! A fire is soon made—a roaring blaze ten feet long and four feet wide ; log after log is piled on, and at last we feel warm once more.

Then comes supper. That is a very simple function ; a pot of tea is made, some rice boiled and bacon fried ; we each hack a piece off a frozen loaf and hold it to the fire on a pointed stick until it thaws out.

Then the blankets are spread out as close to the fire as we dare, and with a large supply of logs

ready to pile on to the fire, we roll ourselves up in our blankets and endeavour to sleep.

We doze off now and then, but wake up to feel either our feet or our heads or our backs cold. Sitting up so close to the fire that our knees almost burn, the frost forms on the blanket over our back. Every now and then some one gets up to put a few logs on the fire; the blaze is kept going all through the night.

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We are not sorry when the dawn comes and we get up for another day's tramp. Breakfast is the same as supper, our packs are made up and off we start.

After a few miles we come to a survey line, a clearing in the brush, about ten feet wide, but the trees are only cut down a couple of feet from the ground, so as to leave a clear line of sight, and the windfalls and underbrush are only removed to such an extent as to satisfy the same requirement; in fact, the trees which have been felled in order to clear the line of sight add to the already numerous windfalls. But it is better than making our way through the forest, as we can at least see where we are going, and the compass is no longer required, as all survey lines run either north and south or east and west.

This ground was actually surveyed by this same party last year, so we know where we are now, and presently come out on to the trail that goes up Willow River. It is some distance from the river at this point, and it is not until we reach the ford, three miles lower down, that we come in sight of the river. Then it appears below us, a

smooth, white sheet, and we walk across on the solid ice. No doubt the Bear River presents a similar appearance now, so it is as well that we left the boats when we did.

There is a trail all the way now, and a ranch seven miles ahead, which is our objective to-night. There may not be any one there, but we will at least be able to get into the cabin and sleep in comparative comfort.

Travelling is very easy now that we have a trail to follow, but there are frequent windfalls blocking the way, and our packs are very heavy. There are footsteps in the snow—two men have passed ahead of us recently—and presently we come across the remains of a fire, the embers still hot.

At last, just as it is getting dusk, we come to a clearance, and our hearts leap with joy. The ranch at last!

But we are not there yet; it is a clearance belonging to the ranch, but there is no cabin on it, and we continue another mile along the trail. Then we come to a large open space, and there, sure enough, is the cabin. The trail skirts a rail fence, and when we come to the gate we tumble over each other in our haste to get through and on to the little log cabin.

But when we get there a bitter disappointment awaits us; the door is securely fastened, and there is no stove-pipe appearing above the roof, so that, even if we did break in, we couldn't light a fire.

What a blow, after looking forward throughout the long, weary day to a warm place to sleep in at night! Moreover, there is no dry wood anywhere

SUNDAY IN CAMP.

THE FIRST SNOW.

To face p. 146.

to be seen, and it is hard to keep a fire going on green poplar, which is the only wood in sight.

However, Walter remembers that there is another cabin a mile farther on, and we decide to push on and try our luck there. For there must be a stove in one of the two. A little wind is beginning to spring up, and the cold is more bitter than ever.

Wretched and weary, we reach the second house as darkness is falling; it is much larger than the first, but there is no sign of a stove-pipe here either, and apparently no window. We break the door in, only to find that it is nothing but a barn, and that we cannot light a fire in it without risk of burning it down, besides which there is no outlet for the smoke.

So we adjourn to the nearest thicket, and collect what wood we can and make a fire, a miserable, smoky fire of green poplar, and resign ourselves to the gloomy prospect of another night in the open with a wretched fire and a bitter wind.

But Happy, resourceful and energetic, volunteers to go back to the other place and investigate. This is not the dwelling-house, so that must be, and in a dwelling-house there must be some means of making a fire, so he takes his axe and goes off. The rest of us make what we can of the fire and wait, too miserable even to talk. Walter goes off to help Happy; he thinks activity of some kind is preferable to this waiting.

Three-quarters of an hour pass, and then, oh joy! Happy returns with the news that he has broken into the cabin, and there really is a stove in it, or rather a fireplace, the pipe having been

pulled in and the hole in the roof covered over to prevent the snow from coming in.

So we put on our packs once more and trudge back in the dark. The stove-pipe is soon fixed up again, and, thank God! there is a good supply of dry poplar all cut up ready for use. Homer breaks a hole in the ice on the creek close by and gets a supply of water, and we feel once more that life is worth living after all.

But our troubles are not yet over; the stove-pipe refuses to draw, and the little cabin is soon full of the dense, pungent smoke, which only those who have burnt poplar or cottonwood can fully appreciate.

It chokes us, our eyes smart and water, our nostrils are like fire, and we gasp for breath. We have to open the door, and each one goes out to get some air. Only by lying on the floor and placing wet handkerchiefs over our faces can we make it endurable.

There are no candles to be found, and we have brought none with us, so the only light we have is supplied by a rag dip consisting of a saucer filled with bacon grease in which a piece of cloth is immersed, the end hanging over the side of the saucer being lighted. The light is extremely feeble, and the smoke from it materially increases the pungency of the atmosphere.

We eat our supper as best we can under these not very ideal circumstances, and then settle down for the night. The whole floor space and the lowest bunk are filled by our blankets; the upper bunks are quite out of the question on account of the smoke. Now and then some one gets up

and opens the door for a few minutes, and a little air comes in and a little smoke goes out, but it is hanging like a heavy pall down to within eighteen inches of the floor all the time.

Even so it is preferable to facing another night in the open, especially with this wind, and in spite of everything we really do go to sleep and pass a very good night, awaking refreshed and happy.

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In the morning there is a trace of snow in the air, and it is overcast, but still bitterly cold, and there is a gusty wind. Pinker's ranch is fifteen miles ahead, within seven miles of Fort George, and we intend to make for that to-day. The country is more open; there has been a great forest fire through here some years ago, and much of the land is covered with a gaunt forest of blackened trunks, still standing, like the bristles of some vast brush. The ground between is strewn with the trees that have fallen, blackened and charred. A new growth has not yet sprung up, and the country has a most oppressively dreary aspect, nothing but blackened stubs and white snow.

Now and then we come to a patch which the fire has not succeeded in destroying, and it is a relief to be among living trees again.

Then we come to wide, flat meadows, which must be very fine in summer, but are now dreary sheets of white. The country is hilly, and we have some steep climbs, and must pause frequently to rest, supporting our packs on a stump or log, but not stopping long for fear of freezing. The cold begins to feel a little less intense than it has been for the last few days, but the mercury in my thermometer

does not yet appear on the scale, so it must still be more than eight below.

On descending a hill, well timbered here, a beautiful lake opens out before us; we make a short cut across a corner of it, and then skirt along its shore for a mile; it is Nine Mile Lake, and we know we are close to Pinker's. But before we get there we have one more hill to cross, and from its summit we see all round a dreary, desolate wilderness of white, made ten times more desolate by the charred stubs standing up, black and gaunt. Away down there in the distance, so very far away they look, are two little cabins in the midst of a clear, white space, surrounded by rail fences. And as we get nearer, to our unutterable joy we distinguish smoke rising from one cabin, and know that Mr. Pinker is there! By this time the air is thick with snow, the very fine, dry snow which alone can fall during zero weather.

Then a little spurt and we drag ourselves in, one by one, to the welcome shelter and warmth of the cabin, dump our packs and sit down to rest. Mr. Pinker soon has a steaming stew prepared for us, and we sit down to the best meal we have ever had; at least, it seems the best to us after our recent experiences.

There is a lot to talk about; we have not heard news of the outside world for six weeks, and much has happened during the interval. The two men whose footprints we saw passed here last night; it was Mr. Pearson and one of his men; the rest of his party are still out on Bear River, below where we were. It has been twenty-four below at Fort George for the past week or so, and it was probably

several degrees colder where we were. The snow is falling fast now, and when I go outside it feels quite warm. I leave the thermometer out for a time, and find that it has already gone up to zero.

What a joy it is to spend a warm night in an atmosphere which certainly might be better, but is at least free from the pungent smoke which we had to breathe last night!

There is a wagon-road from here in to Fort George, and in the morning Mr. Pinker takes us in on his sleigh. It is cold, and Tom prefers to walk most of the way, but the rest of us are content to ride. When we reach the Fraser it is frozen so solidly that a team and sleigh could be taken over with no danger; but Mr. Pinker is wise, and will not risk his team on it for another day or two, so we once more take up our packs and trudge across the three hundred yards of rough, broken up ice, and up the road into Fort George, where we fortunately find accommodation in the newly erected hotel which has been opened since we were here in September, the old hotel having been burnt down shortly before that.

The surveyors are now home—at least, in what is their home for the time being—but we have to make ourselves as comfortable as possible in the hotel. And if the matchboard building had been a marble palace we couldn't have been more glad to get there and dump down our packs for the last time! No more weary tramping, with the ever-increasing weight of the packs on our shoulders, no more climbing over windfalls, and struggling through tight places between trees! And what a luxury, a change of clothes and a bath! Our clothes are mostly

held together by safety pins, my overalls are torn in a dozen places, and we certainly look pretty ragged. But that is the usual thing here for any one coming in from the bush; nobody takes any notice of that sort of thing.

But once more disappointment awaits us; in all this great hotel there is not a single bath! Such luxuries are evidently considered quite superfluous. There is one in the barber's shop down "town," but the pipe is frozen, and it is out of commission. And we have not had our clothes off for a fortnight! So we have to do the best we can with buckets of hot water in our rooms; at any rate we can get an entire change of clothes.

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Since the river has frozen all traffic has had to come by road. The road from here to Blackwater is only intended for winter use, the surface having been left quite rough, not even the stumps removed, so that it is not until there is a couple of feet of snow that it is possible to travel over it with any degree of comfort. At present there is too much snow for wheel traffic, but it is questionable whether there is enough for sleighing all the way. So the B.X. agent cannot tell us when there is likely to be a stage in, and we have to sit tight and wait.

There are a large number of people going out to the outside world just now, but most of them do the trip to Ashcroft on foot; the stage trip is expensive, and there are lots of road-houses where one can put up on the way, and often there is work to be done, so that a man can often "work his passage" along the road.

While in Fort George we look up the rancher into

IN THE ICE.

LOADING THE BOATS.

ON THE WAY HOME.

SOUTH FORT GEORGE.

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whose cabin we broke, and make some slight remuneration for the firewood and other things we used. He is very glad that we were able to get in.

On Sunday morning there is a service in the Episcopal Church; it is held on alternate Sundays in South and Central. This being the turn of South, I made myself as respectable as possible under the circumstances and entered the church at the appointed hour. There I found the clergyman putting wood on a little stove which kept the building at a decent temperature with some attention. Presently a lady turned up and the service began, the lady and myself forming the whole congregation! I was hoping that the hymns would be omitted, but such was not the case; we went solemnly through with the three of them. The clergyman sang one tune, the lady another, and I made what noise I could at intervals; it was almost like field service in South Africa! Afterwards the clergyman told me that they very often had a practically empty church, but sometimes they would get twenty or thirty people.

The cold snap continues for three days after our arrival; one morning the mercury registers thirty-one and a half below at the Hudson's Bay Post just outside the town. A peculiar phenomenon appears in the sky when the sun is low: a luminous form of peculiar shape appears on either side of the sun at a considerable distance from it. These are called "sun dogs" and we are told that they indicate a change of temperature; it will either get much colder or the present cold snap will let up. Fortunately, the latter proves to be the case, and on

our fourth day in Fort George it actually thaws. Then for the first time I can open the window of my bedroom; it had been frozen hard, and the atmosphere in the hotel after all that time with no windows open was something cruel.

The increase in temperature brings a good heavy fall of snow; the road is soon two feet deep, and we get the welcome message that a sleigh has left Quesnel. There are many more people applying for seats in the sleigh than can be accommodated, but we have return tickets from Ashcroft, and our seats are secured.

The negotiations for the purchase of the Indian Reserve between South and Central by the Grand Trunk Pacific have been carried through successfully, and the first instalment of the purchase money paid over. In consequence there is a great rejoicing among the Indians, and many of them are drunk. It is a criminal offence to supply liquor to an Indian, but it gets to them somehow all the same. The one policeman (who is distinguished by a brass badge, generally worn out of sight, on the waistcoat) has a pretty tough time; he has arrested two Indians, but the skookum-house is small, and not at all strongly built, and if he arrests any more, he will be up against it for somewhere to put them. The four that deserted us on Bear River are among the most lively in their celebrations.

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After six monotonous days in Fort George we start out on the road. It is a dull morning, but not snowing. Fortunately, it is freezing, for wet snow is very heavy to travel over.

There are two ladies in the company; they prefer

to sit on the box with the driver, a position which they retain all the way down to Ashcroft.

For the first three miles we have to walk up a steep hill, but, once on the high ground, we go merrily along all day. Presently the sun comes out and it is much more cheerful. The black and dark green of the pines, the pure white of the snow, and the blue sky above, make a delightful combination; it is very different from the bare grey and black of the burnt forest through which we came on our way in to Fort George. There are a number of ranches along the road; at one of these we stop for lunch. We get the use of the stove to cook our food on, but we have to bring our own provisions, for there are no regular road-houses between Fort George and Quesnel; the road is only used in winter when the river is out of commission.

At night we stop at a ranch where a bunk-house has been erected. It consists of two large rooms with a door at each end, and a large stove in each room. Three tiers of bunks line the walls all round; these are nearly all full, for there are other travellers besides our sleigh-load of twelve. For the two ladies a screen has to be improvised out of a blanket strung up across a corner, behind which they can undress in a certain amount of privacy, but with a very small amount of comfort. But they have as much room there as in a sleeper on the railway.

The stoves are over-fired, and the atmosphere is fearful; some of the people object to having a door open at all, but every now and then two of us open the doors and one stands in each doorway for a few minutes to allow a little air to blow

through and get rid of some of the foul atmosphere. The evening meal is prepared by the help of one of the stoves; most of us have brought food that does not want any elaborate cooking, but we all make either tea, coffee, or cocoa. Then we wrap ourselves up in our blankets and retire early, for we have to rise at three in the morning.

Getting up at three and making our breakfast does not prove to be such an awful ordeal as we had expected; in fact, as long as it is dark in any case, it doesn't make much difference whether the clock points to three or seven. At four the sleigh starts, and we travel in the dark for nearly four hours. It sounds dismal, but it was in reality not nearly so bad, and we got quite used to it before we reached Ashcroft.

On the afternoon of the second day we reach the valley of the Blackwater River and have a superb view of the valley a thousand feet below us and the little settlement in the bottom.

At Blackwater we spend the night. Here the road from Fort George joins the old "Telegraph Trail," which follows the telegraph line up past Fort Fraser to Hazelton and away to the north. This telegraph line was erected in the early days with the object of crossing the Behring Straits and forming a connection between America and Europe overland. When the Atlantic Cable was successfully established that was abandoned, but this line remains to serve the Yukon and Alaska.

The road is better from here on, but there is a long, weary walk out of Blackwater, at least six miles, up out of the deep valley, for the ground is higher on the south side than on the north. It is

daylight before we get into the sleigh. We make forty miles that day, and about seven o'clock in the evening we reach the bank of the Fraser opposite Quesnel. The river is not frozen over here now, but there is too much ice for the ferry to be worked, and we are transferred across in large native dug-outs lashed together in pairs, and skilfully manipulated by Indians. Once more we have comfortable beds to sleep in, and don't have to cook our own meals.

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Fortunately, a sleigh is leaving for the 150 Mile House next morning, so we have no delay in Quesnel. Some passengers from Barkerville are going down, and the sleigh is only a small one; so a little trailer is fixed on behind upon which three men ride, in constant danger of being thrown off on going round curves, but greatly enjoying the sport.

As far as Soda Creek we follow the Fraser, passing some large ranches on the way. Over this part of the road the teams are changed every twenty miles or so, and progress is rapid. The sixty miles to Soda Creek are covered by the early afternoon. While the driver goes down the long hill to the settlement to change the teams we walk on, for the road continues on the high ground, and he has to come back up the hill to the same point again. Some of us have covered seven miles before we are overtaken.

Late in the evening we reach the 150 Mile House. Here there is a stageload of passengers from Quesnel Forks and the southern Cariboo country waiting to go out, but the outgoing sleigh only

holds fifteen and we are already fourteen, so only one of them can come ; the rest have to abide in patience until another sleigh goes through. It is rather hard lines on them, but they naturally give the preference to through passengers from Fort George.

The last portion of the trip is rather spoiled by the snow, which falls, not heavily but continuously, most of the day after leaving the 150. The second day is better, and we get a splendid view of the Chasm in its garment of white. Then at the Twenty Mile House, we come to the end of the snow, and make our final change of vehicles, this time proceeding in wheeled stages, of which it requires two to accommodate our party of fifteen, and, after passing over some miles of slushy snow, we proceed on dry ground down into Ashcroft.

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Our six days' sleigh-ride, covering 325 miles, has been an interesting experience, but we are not sorry that it is over ; we are not altogether sorry at the prospect of not having to get up at 3 a.m. any more either ! The two ladies have stood the trip wonderfully ; no mere man dare grumble when they are there, fresh and bright all the time. It is quite warm now, and the sun is shining brightly ; there will probably be some mild weather now for a time after the cold snap, which was an unusually early one. Even in Fort George it is very unusual to get zero weather in November ; it is usually well on into January before the cold weather comes, but when it does come it is liable to go down to fifty below at times, though never for very long at a time.

At Ashcroft we disperse. Some go off on the eastbound train with a four days' railway journey still ahead of them; but those of us going west have to wait overnight and catch the morning train, landing us home in Vancouver once more in the afternoon. And the one thing we look forward to most of all is a good hot bath.

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CHAPTER V

PRINCE RUPERT AND THE QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS

In the early summer of 1908 there was a camp on Kaien Island, near the mouth of the Skeena River, 550 miles north-west of Vancouver; tents were all over the place for weeks: one would have thought there must be a gold-rush on. And so indeed there was, but the gold was not to be got out of the ground by hard toil, but by a much less laborious process. The terminal town-site of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway was to be put on the market, and every one wanted to be in at the first and secure the best lots.

Soon after the sale inside property went up to fancy prices, but the unexpected delay in the completion of the railway led to a subsequent slump and a stagnation which has lasted for several years, and things cannot be expected to improve to any great extent until the railway is completed, at any rate from Winnipeg to the Pacific.[1]

There have been many disparaging statements made about Prince Rupert as a townsite, the most common remark being that it is all either rock or muskeg, and there is a certain amount of truth in this. But muskeg can be drained, and it is

[1] Completed in 1914. But the financial crisis of 1913, followed by the war, has delayed developments.

FIRST AVENUE, PRINCE RUPERT, 1910.

SECOND AVENUE, PRINCE RUPERT, 1910.

RESIDENTIAL SECTION, PRINCE RUPERT, 1910.

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being very effectually drained, and as for the rock, we have it on very good authority that there are worse sites upon which to build than a rock!

It is a picturesque townsite; some way back from the sea front there is a steep rise, a cliff in places, and the buildings on top of this have a very commanding aspect. Beyond this is comparatively flat ground for nearly a mile, with a valley running through it, parallel to the coastline, and behind everything rises a steep, densely timbered hill, which, on account of its steepness, effectually puts a limit to the townsite in that direction.

The lateral extent of the townsite is only about four miles. This sounds large enough according to European ideas, but out here the residential sections of a city spread over enormous areas, each house standing in its own lot, so that an area of four square miles does not mean a very large city.

For further growth, Prince Rupert will have to spread out on to the north side of the harbour, where there is almost unlimited room for expansion.

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One very satisfactory point about the town is that those responsible for deciding which should be adopted, among the various townsite plans submitted, have chosen one which takes advantage of the natural features of the ground, many of the avenues running in graceful curves, forming a pleasing change from the appalling monotony of the usual rectangular block system. If the buildings are at all in keeping with the site, Prince Rupert will one day be a very beautiful city.

Even as it is, the ground is so irregular that in some places a great deal of filling in has to be done, and in others deep rock cuttings have to be made, at great expense to the ratepayers. It reminds one of Seattle, where hills are removed bodily if they are in the way; but whereas there the streets are all in rectangular blocks, the cars going up some of the cross streets at a slope which looks like the roof of a house, here there is no attempt at any such excessive regularity, the cutting and filling in being only what is required to provide a reasonable amount of level ground for building and moderate gradients for the streets.

A very wise by-law provides that all buildings shall be erected from the permanent level of the street, whatever its present level. The effect is rather peculiar at present; one sees everywhere houses raised on trestles, as indeed many of the streets are also. One building, a Government office, must be fully twenty feet off the ground, being connected by a plank gangway with the street, which is cut in a hillside.

Where the street has been cut down fifteen or twenty feet in the solid rock, it is rather a hard task for the owner of a lot to cut it down so as to build on the street level, but probably the by-law will be modified in such cases.

The Prince Rupert Club, built before the passing of that by-law, is perched up on a rock some twenty feet above the road, the latter having been cut down to that extent since the Club was built.

* * * * *

When I first visited Prince Rupert in 1910 it was already quite a town, but surely one of the

most peculiar towns ever seen. For every street consisted of a planked way some twelve feet wide, raised two or three feet from the ground, and at a distance on each side of that the main business streets had a plank sidewalk, the spaces in between the sidewalks and the roadway being just the natural surface of the ground, the smaller stumps still standing. In the middle of Second Avenue a steep, rocky eminence protruded, dividing the avenue into two separate portions.

A few yards beyond the last houses on each of the avenues the process of blasting and removing stumps was going on in full swing, and the uneven places were being levelled over. Building was going on furiously; on all sides the noise of carpenters' hammers was incessant.

At the time of my second visit, in 1911, the most noticeable change was the number of drains which were being installed, regardless of expense, for it is an expensive job to cut drains in the solid rock. The city was being built to last, and they were setting about it in the right way.

When I went there again in 1912 the central part of the town had indeed undergone a transformation. The plank roadways had disappeared, and in their place were fine macadamized avenues; Second Avenue stretched right through unbroken, a fine, wide, almost level street, the hill which before had divided it in two having been cut through, not only by the avenue, but by a cross street as well.

In the residential section, on the high ground, stretching away to the east, the streets are still made of planks, some raised to a considerable height

from the ground in places, and it will be a long time before these planked roadways can be replaced by something more solid, as most of the land is muskeg, and a great deal of material will be required to make a solid roadbed.

You would not expect in such a place to find automobiles, or motor-cars as you call them over there. But there are some already, and, as more of the streets are macadamized, the number will increase. An auto-road is already under construction round Kaien Island, a distance of some fifteen or twenty miles.

In the course of time all the present wooden buildings in the business section will be replaced by more permanent structures of stone, brick, or concrete; it will not be long before all the public buildings are so replaced. The G.T.P. is to build a hotel at a cost of two million dollars, so it will be "some hotel" when it is completed.

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Another complaint made against the selection of Prince Rupert as the site for the G.T.P. terminus is that there is no anchorage in the harbour, the bottom being all solid rock. It is a fine, land-locked harbour, but if that is true it is a very serious drawback. The entrance to the harbour is narrow, and there is a strong current in it, but it is not nearly so bad in this respect as Vancouver.

When this end of the railway was being built, there was very great difficulty in bridging the space between Kaien Island and the next little island that intervenes between it and the mainland, the current in the narrow channel being so strong as to wash away all attempted foundations. Many were the

PRINCE RUPERT CLUB, SECOND AVENUE, 1912.

CITY ASSESSOR'S OFFICE, 1912.

FIFTH STREET CUT, 1912.

ON THE G.T.P. RAILWAY.

To face p. 164.

croakers who prophesied that it would never be done, and who foresaw nothing but failure ahead for the railway and for the town site. Later on the same sort of croakers took to prophesying that the Panama Canal would never be opened. But the world goes round in spite of them.

It was even said by many that Prince Rupert was only a blind, and that the Grand Trunk Pacific would ultimately make its terminus at Port Simpson, twenty miles farther north, and have another townsite boom there after they had made all they could out of Prince Rupert.

The townsite has serious disadvantages, that cannot be denied, but they are not insuperable; they can be overcome by those two useful qualities patience and perseverance, qualities which are being shown to a remarkable extent by the progressive little community. And it necessarily follows that the expense is great, and that taxation must be heavy for many years to come.

But they are looking forward to the completion of the railway and to the opening of the Panama Canal to bring prosperity. There will be large steamers running to the Orient, and no doubt many running through the Canal to the Old Country, and Prince Rupert will undoubtedly be a thriving port before many years have passed.[1]

But will it, as its inhabitants claim, be a rival of Vancouver, or as some of its sanguine partisans assert, far surpass the southern city?

No, such a dream seems quite unwarranted; the supremacy of Vancouver can never be seriously questioned. It is the terminus of two trans-

[1] See footnote to p. 160.

continental lines, and will before long be a shipping terminus of others, Canadian and American; it is in an ideal position for a large city. But Prince Rupert must always be a city of one railway, unless another line parallels the G.T.P. all the way down the Skeena River from Hazelton, which is not likely. There will be other lines crossing Northern B.C., but they will probably locate on other termini, on Observatory Inlet or Portland Canal; Prince Rupert will in all probability have only the G.T.P.

There is a great and fertile hinterland behind the Coast Range, and Prince Rupert will no doubt have its share in the shipment of the products, but it is not likely to be the only port. The Pacific Great Eastern, connecting Fort George, or, as it has recently been rechristened, Prince George, with Vancouver, will divert part of the traffic southwards; another line is to be built, with Bella Coola as its port, and that will be the nearest port to Prince George, and consequently to the great Peace River country.

So Prince Rupert, great as it may become, can never be looked upon as a rival to Vancouver.

It is popularly believed that the climate of the northern city is abominable. It is said to rain there eight days a week during the rainy season, which, report has it, lasts from the 1st of January until the 31st of December. But that is a slight exaggeration. It cannot be denied that there is a lot of rain up there, as there is everywhere along the coast, but it is not so bad as all that; I have seen some glorious weather there in the summer.

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The passage up the coast from Vancouver is very

beautiful, although it becomes monotonous after a time. Only in two places is the open sea seen at all, for three hours crossing Queen Charlotte Sound, and for about an hour in Milbank Sound; all the rest of the thirty-six hours' voyage is in inland channels, between the various islands and the mainland.

The Grand Trunk Pacific boats, *Prince Rupert* and *Prince George*, are magnificent steamers, with fine, spacious saloons and staterooms, hot and cold water laid on in each stateroom, and everything as well appointed as in a modern ocean liner. The C.P.R. are also running some fine boats on the Alaska service, calling at Prince Rupert. There are a number of other boats calling there, but these are much the best.

Leaving Vancouver at midnight, we pass out into the Strait of Georgia, forty miles wide here, up past Texada Island, and through Seymour Narrows, then up through Discovery Passage, which broadens out into Johnstone Straits, and at last, leaving the northern end of Vancouver Island on our left, we emerge into Queen Charlotte Sound, where we first feel the swell of the Pacific. But we are soon again in sheltered waters, and with the exception of the short passage across Milbank Sound, we don't see the open Pacific any more.

The coast is indented with long, narrow inlets, and innumerable islands extend all along from Puget Sound to Alaska. The intervening channels are from half a mile to three or four miles wide, and the water is like a lake. The country along the coast is all mountainous and rugged, steep slopes rising from the water's edge to heights of one or

two thousand feet, upon the upper parts of which the snow lies until late in the spring. These slopes are densely timbered, except where a rugged bluff offers no foothold for even the most persevering of pines.

Watercourses are seen, the streams tumbling down the hillside for two thousand feet; sometimes a beautiful waterfall appears as we pass rapidly by.

The scenery is magnificent and picturesque, but one cannot help feeling that it is a pity that so much beautiful country should be absolutely useless. For what can be done with it? It is impossible to grow anything except forest trees, and the rugged nature of the ground makes logging difficult and expensive, so that the greater part of the timber on this part of the coast has not yet been touched. No mineral has yet been discovered, and there is no grazing land. There remains the fishing industry, and that is, in fact, the one industry of the northern British Columbian coast. And that cannot be said to be making use of the land!

There are salmon canneries at various points, and there are Indian villages and settlements of some importance on the way up, but not very many on the channels that we pass through, and we stop at none on the *Prince Rupert* run.

The mouth of the Skeena is a beautiful sight; little brown, rocky islets, surmounted by dark green verdure, dotted about all over the place. Just up the river are numerous canneries, in which the coast Indians find employment. Before Prince Rupert appeared, Port Essington was the chief port of call in these parts. It is ten miles up the Skeena, and we don't see anything of it on the coast run

ON THE NORTHERN COAST.

SKEENA RIVER STEAMERS, PRINCE RUPERT.

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now. The railway now passes along on the opposite side of the river, and it is completely side-tracked, being reached by a ferry. It is a very picturesque little settlement, overlooked by a great grey mountain.

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The first time I was at Prince Rupert was on the way up to Hazelton. There was no railway then, and I went up by one of the river steamers, an interesting and exciting trip. It took five days to make the 110 miles, tying up every night, and stopping frequently for supplies of cordwood during the day. We had to wait over a day at Kitselas, below the famous cañon, as the water was too low to make the passage. And after all we had to get our dunnage transferred across the portage, and get on to another steamer above the cañon. But our own boat got through a day or two later, and I got down on her again.

It was exciting work getting through the cañon. The steamers had to be lined down as well as up. In one place we bumped the side and smashed some of the woodwork on the upper deck. The process of lining is very interesting. A party of two or three men are landed on a bar or rock, and there make fast the line to an iron ring which is securely attached. Then the line is paid out by a winch on the deck as the steamer goes down through the cañon. At one time there were no less than three such lines attached at different points. When any one line is no longer needed a signal is given by the whistle, and that line is cast off, the men in charge of it coming down through the cañon in a little canoe, sweeping down past the bow of the steamer at a fearful rate,

and coming up alongside in the sheltered water on the other side. It is a skilful feat, and looks both difficult and dangerous.

The trip down was made in one day, all the way to Port Essington, two hours' run from Prince Rupert; such is the difference between travelling with and against the stream on the Skeena.

But Skeena navigation is a thing of the past now; the more prosaic but safer and quicker railway has replaced it, and Hazelton no longer needs to lay in provisions in the fall to last through the winter.

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Both my subsequent visits to Prince Rupert were en route for the Queen Charlotte Islands, that fascinating group lying away out in the Pacific, the very "farthest West" of Canada, the last outpost of the British Empire.

These islands form part of the province of British Columbia, and a very small part at that, but their isolated position gives them a dignity of their own, standing out in the ocean like the British Isles, or Iceland, or Japan. And they have, like these, produced a daring, seafaring race; for before the advent of the white man, and for many years afterwards, the Haidas of the Queen Charlotte Islands were the terror of the whole coast, from Alaska to the Columbia River. They crossed over Hecate Straits, forty-five miles wide at the narrowest point, in their great war canoes, and travelled up and down the coast, ravaging and plundering the tribes of the mainland.

These old war canoes, some of which can still be seen, drawn up under the trees, behind the beach

at Skidegate, long disused, are indeed mighty boats. But to cross Hecate Straits in them, and to double Cape Flattery, and pass down the exposed coast of what is now the State of Washington, certainly required some daring.

The Haidas are believed to be of Japanese origin, possibly descended from the crew of some Japanese ship which strayed as far as these islands some time in the remote past. A Haida and a Japanese dressed in European clothes are practically indistinguishable, but that is not conclusive, as the same applies more or less to all the coast Indians.

Their language, however, is said to show certain resemblances to the Japanese, and none whatever to that of any other North American race, with the exception of one small tribe, no doubt of similar origin, on the Alaskan coast.

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Unfortunately, since the white man has taken possession of the country, the Haidas, like all the other Indians, have sadly degenerated. Living in houses with glass windows, and wearing European clothes, which they can't take off and keep dry when it rains, consumption, previously unknown, is now rife amongst them, and what consumption leaves undone, whisky and the other benefits of civilization make up for. The result is that the once populous and flourishing race is now reduced to a mere handful. On all Graham Island there are only the two villages of Skidegate and Masset left, with a population of a few hundreds at most.

The greater part of them are employed in the salmon-fishing business on the north end of Graham Island and on the mainland coast. During the

spring they fish in the mouths of the Skeena, Nass, and other rivers, and many of them work in the canneries. The extensive halibut fishing in Hecate Straits, and that for cod outside the islands, are done with steam or gasolene boats, manned from Prince Rupert or Vancouver.

Then there is the whaling station at Rose Harbour, at the southern extremity of Moresby Island, in which a number are employed. The scent in the atmosphere is not exactly suggestive of roses, but they say that those who work there get used to it soon. The same applies to the fertilizer factory at Cumshewa.

As a consequence of these industries there are very few Indians to be seen in the villages during the spring and summer months, only old men and women.

In front of the houses, ranged along the beach, are still to be seen those curious erections, the totem poles.

Most of those at Skidegate, unlike those at Alert Bay and elsewhere on Vancouver Island, consist of a plain pole surmounted by a single device, generally a bird, either complete or only the head, three of those with heads only having a rectangular board at the top of the pole, in which the head is set.

These are, as I have already pointed out, not objects of worship, but heraldic designs, coats-of-arms, so to speak, although possibly emblematic of some tutelary spirit.

At one place on Skidegate Inlet there is a bed of a peculiar soft carbonaceous "slate," and this the natives carve into models of totem poles and other devices with great ingenuity and skill, producing

OLD HAIDA WAR CANOES, SKIDEGATE.

WEST END, QUEEN CHARLOTTE CITY.

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really artistic objects. Formerly baskets were made here too, but that industry seems to have died out; in fact, it is difficult to get Indian baskets anywhere now, except those made in the Mission Settlement on the North Vancouver Indian Reserve.

Close to the Indian village of Skidegate is the graveyard. The natives are Christians now, and many of the graves have fine marble tombstones, some of them being surmounted by the figure of an animal, either a bear or a bird of some sort. Many of the graves of the more important people have a little wooden roof over them; over some recent graves I have seen white cloths stretched, giving them a very weird appearance.

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The Queen Charlotte group consists of Graham and Moresby Islands and a number of smaller ones. Between the two main islands is Skidegate Inlet, which is reduced to a mere channel at the western extremity, but on the eastern side forms a magnificent harbour, twenty miles long and from five to eight wide. In the inlet are a number of islands, and the view from the high ground along the shore on a bright day is glorious. From Mount Etheline (which must surely have been named by a chemist) there must be a wonderful view over the inlet, and away out over the west coast as well, but the timber and undergrowth around the base of the mountain are so dense that an ascent is no easy undertaking.

The whole of Moresby Island is mountainous, and it is deeply indented by inlets on both sides. There are numerous copper-mines located at different points, none of which have yet, however, reached a commercial stage. The mountainous

country continues northwards through the western half of Graham Island; it is, in fact, a continuation of the chain which forms the backbone of Vancouver Island. The eastern half of Graham Island is altogether different, being comparatively flat, underlain by more recent sedimentary rocks, of such regularity that along the whole sixty miles of the east coast of this island there is not a single harbour. It is risky, on this account, for small boats to go out in Hecate Straits if the weather is at all doubtful.

Along the east coast a number of ranchers have settled; it is almost the only part of the island where there is any comparatively clear ground; over the greater part the vegetation is very dense, being similar to that of Vancouver Island.

Along a portion of the north coast, between Rose Spit and Masset Inlet, is one of the finest beaches in the world, some twenty miles of good, hard sand, over which an auto can be driven. What a magnificent seaside resort this will be in the near future! How the citizens of Prince Rupert will flock over, and not from Prince Rupert only, but from much farther afield, as soon as there is proper accommodation and transportation.

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There are a number of white settlements on the islands, the chief being Queen Charlotte City, about five miles from the Indian village of Skidegate. A lumber-mill is situated in the heart of the "city," but in it only Japanese are employed. The "city" consists of a number of houses on a strip of flat ground, behind which there is a steep rise of a considerable height. Plank sidewalks serve as streets, no wheeled vehicles having yet been intro-

duced into the "city," but the roads are now being made to connect the different settlements on the island, so that wheeled transport will have to be accommodated in the "city" before very long.

There are two wharves, one put up by the lumber company, at which the steamers call, and the Government wharf, which up to the time of my last visit was purely ornamental. Among the buildings of importance are the hospital, the school, and the Government office. A little building, somewhat resembling a barn, serves as a church. At the time of my first visit it was used on alternate Sundays by the preachers of the two leading denominations, Methodist and Presbyterian, who worked in perfect harmony. The Episcopals, Roman Catholics, and any others there might be had to go without religious services, except such as might be held by visiting padres.

When I visited the place a year later, there was only one sky-pilot; the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches in Canada had come to some sort of a working agreement, and two separate preachers were no longer required. So the other man had got a job as cook in a mining camp a dozen miles away! He was quite enjoying his job, and very pleased when I looked him up in passing. It is quite a usual thing out here for a man to take a variety of professions at different times.

At the eastern end of the city is the hotel, a place in which one is always made comfortable and well fed. The proprietor has a ranch out on the far side of Lena Island, one of the larger islands in the Inlet, and from there he gets supplies of eggs and fresh vegetables of all kinds. This hotel is naturally

the great meeting-place, where people gather to discuss politics and other subjects, and to get news of the outside world from those who may have arrived by the steamer. The islands are not dependent, however, upon the steamer for news; there is a wireless station a few miles away, and there are two weekly papers published on Graham Island.

The other meeting-place is the drug store, which is also the post-office. Here every one comes in to get his mail after the arrival of the steamer, and waits to talk over things in general with everybody else.

There is not yet a bank on the islands, and consequently, as all wages and salaries are paid by cheques, these are used as currency in the islands. I once had occasion to ask the hotel-keeper to cash me a cheque for $200 in order to pay my bill. He gave me a very dirty cheque for $93.20 on the Bank of Nova Scotia, one for $61.50 on the Canadian Bank of Commerce, two or three smaller ones on various banks, and a few odd dollars in cash. Each cheque had five or six endorsements on the back. I suppose ultimately they would reach their banks, but goodness knows how many hands they pass through before they leave the islands!

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For many years past coal has been known to exist at a number of places on Graham Island. As far back as the sixties a mine was opened up at Cowgitz on a seam of anthracite. A large sum of money was spent on a tramway to bring the coal to the sea, and a wharf and bunkers erected.

TOTEM POLES, SKIDEGATE.

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After all this had been done it was discovered that the seam thinned out after a short distance, so the place was abandoned, and all subsequent attempts to reopen it have resulted in failure.

But it is to be hoped that some of the searches for workable coal in other places may be more successful; it would be a great thing for the islands to have an established industry of that sort.

It is a pity that there are so many wild-cat propositions floated; the public is gulled by plausible advertisements, promising enormous returns on all money invested within a ridiculously short space of time, when, very often, the property in question has not the remotest chance of being underlain by coal at a workable depth from the surface.

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A trip into the interior of the island is quite an undertaking; there are a few trails, but there are no horses to be had, so that everything has to be packed on one's back—blanket, tent, cooking outfit, provisions, and whatever spare clothing and instruments are taken. I once went out for ten days, taking a man to help to carry the things. We were both pretty heavily loaded going out, but on the way back our packs were much lighter, in spite of a number of rock specimens.

Although the country is so heavily timbered, it is not at all easy to get dry wood for a fire; the rainfall is very heavy, and the fallen trees rot quickly among the rank undergrowth. It rained a good deal while we were out, and sometimes it seemed as if we would never be able to find anything to make fire with, until we discovered

that hemlock bark would burn even when peeled off trees during a heavy downpour of rain.

It is generally hard to find a place in which to camp. Creeks are numerous, but they are mostly either in deep gullies or surrounded by swampy ground. When the creek is in a gully, it is necessary to camp up on top, wherever a little bit of comparatively level ground can be found between the trees on which to spread the blankets and pitch the tent. Even then it is frequently very damp. One has to make a thick bed of hemlock boughs, so as to form a more or less even and soft surface on which to lie.

Travelling across country, away from a trail, is no easy job, on account of the dense undergrowth. One can generally follow a creek, but there are places where it is necessary to take to the brush, and progress is slow. Sometimes, on the higher ground, among the larger timber, one can travel fairly easily, without being hampered by underbrush, but down near the creeks it is no joke. Occasionally you come to a patch of devil's club, and that is worse than any thorn-bushes to get through.

Ferns grow in luxuriance; one sometimes has to trample underfoot quantities of delicate maidenhairs, for the sheer impossibility of stepping anywhere else. The graceful skunk cabbages add to the beauty of the scene. They are supposed to have a very disagreeable and powerful odour, hence the name, but I have never found it at all objectionable, at a reasonable distance. The views along the creeks are gorgeous. Those who have visited the Fairy Glen at Bettws-y-Coed can imagine what

it is like to pass through mile after mile of such scenery ; water rushing amid rounded rocks, deep pools, cascades, trees fallen across the creek, forming natural bridges high above the water, covered with bright green moss, hanging creepers, graceful ferns in every cranny, luxuriant bushes overhanging the dark pools. It is well worth the labour spent in travelling.

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In some of the valleys we came across fiddle-head ferns in quantities. My companion, although an experienced woodsman, had never eaten them before, and he was much taken with them when I showed him how to prepare them, an accomplishment which I had learned from Hard Ground Henry in the old Slocan days. It makes a great difference to one's fare in the bush to have a fresh green vegetable. We had taken some desiccated vegetables with us, some of which were excellent, particularly the potatoes, which are scarcely distinguishable from the fresh article. But I shall never forget the peas. They are supposed to be soaked in water for twenty-four hours before boiling. Well, we soaked them for twenty-four hours, and then boiled and boiled for hours, but they remained as hard as bullets. After a further soaking of about two days, with boiling for a few hours at intervals, it was possible to detect a slight softening, but that was all ! No more desiccated peas for me until they improve the manufacture !

We took no flour with us for such a short trip, but a few loaves of bread and a supply of hard tack, or ship's biscuit, to use when the bread was done. Hard tack is by no means bad if one has

good teeth. It can also be boiled and prepared in several ways.

Dried fruits formed a staple part of our fare; one can get such a variety of them nowadays, and they are so handy to eat straight, besides being excellent when boiled with rice. When in the bush, my lunch generally consists of a pocketful of dried fruits of some kind, sometimes with the addition of a little bread or hard tack, and cheese.

One night we slept in a shack at one of the old coal prospects, where an attempt had been made some years ago to open a mine. It is used a good deal by passing travellers, and scraps of food are left about, with the result that it swarms with mice. One ran over my companion's face during the night. It is nice to have a roof over one's head when it rains, and a stove indoors on which to cook your food, but the open air is sometimes preferable, even in wet weather!

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On the flanks of Mount Etheline, towards Yakoun Lake, the country has been devastated by a forest fire; gaunt grey and blackened stubs are standing up everywhere, and the ground is littered with those that have fallen. The fire must have been some years ago, for a new growth is beginning to make its appearance. Fireweed grows in rank luxuriance; the trail is obliterated by it in places; between the fireweed and the skunk cabbage, the trail is often completely blocked, and it would be difficult to trace it if it were not for the frequent windfalls which have been sawn through, or over which there is some means of climbing.

On the way back down the valley of the Honna we met a party working on the trail, making a good pack trail, four feet wide, over which a horse could travel in comfort, laying corduroy over all the soft places, and putting in good, substantial bridges over the creeks. A bridge was to be put in across the Honna; the trail at that time crossed it in the usual primitive fashion, by means of a large tree felled across the river, there some eighty feet wide. It is sometimes rather a ticklish job crossing these log bridges with the water rushing and roaring among the rocks below; one feels so top-heavy with a great pack on one's back. The upper surface of the log is, of course, flattened, but even then it is not easy for some people to cross without the risk of getting giddy. Fortunately, both of us had pretty good heads.[1]

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Some day they will have roads all through the island; they are trying to open it up, but, with the exception of the prospect of finding workable coal seams, there is not much to attract any one into the interior of the island. The road up the Honna Valley will be chiefly used as a means of communication between Skidegate Inlet and the north coast, via Masset Inlet.

There are few open patches in the interior, and the clearing is so very heavy that there is little inducement for any one to take up land for cultivation in the interior at present. The timber is smaller than that on Vancouver Island, so far as

[1] The little bridge seen in the photograph has a handrail, but these are not generally considered necessary in the case of larger log bridges.

I have seen, and there is a large proportion of hemlock, which is useless except for pulp, so that, except on the coast, where it is handy for transportation, the logging industry is not likely to develop on these islands for some time to come.

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The steamship service to the islands leaves much to be desired; on the return trip from Queen Charlotte City one has to go all the way down the coast of Moresby Island, some hundred miles or so, making numerous calls, and then return north to Prince Rupert. It is an interesting trip, but wastes a whole day.

The passage down Moresby Island is almost all inland sailing, between smaller islands and the main one, some of the passages being very tortuous. The scenery is similar to that along the mainland coast. A number of copper prospects are seen, some with tramways down to the sea. Jedway, the former seat of the Mining Recorder, is a picturesquely situated little settlement, in a beautiful harbour. The Mining Recorder has now been moved to Queen Charlotte City, having been promoted to the rank of Government Agent, and Lord High Everything Else in view of the growing importance of the islands.

On one of the smaller islands on the way down there is a hot spring. Some day it will be "discovered," and turned to profit; the millionaires of the Pacific Coast will flock there to "take the waters" and be cured of all sorts of ailments.

The last port of call is Rose Harbour, the whaling station. Last time I came down we saw a whaler come in with a large whale lashed alongside.

INDIAN CEMETERY, SKIDEGATE.

IN CAMP

MY COMPANION ON THE TRAIL.

A PRIMITIVE BRIDGE.

YAKOUN LAKE.

To face p. 182.

A whaling station is not a place at which one wants to stop very long ; they say that the employees get so used to the scent that they miss it if they go away, and that it is most healthy, being particularly good for consumptives. But for a visitor it is just a little too rich, and I almost think I would rather die of consumption than live there !

Then we leave Rose Harbour and its savoury atmosphere behind, and head out into the open water of Hecate Strait, where it is liable to be pretty lively, and, making straight for Prince Rupert, which is nearly two hundred miles away, the Queen Charlotte Islands are soon lost to view.

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CHAPTER VI

THE PEACE RIVER

The Peace River! What fascination there is in the mere mention of the name of that great mysterious river of the unknown north! It is the first to break through the barrier of the Rocky Mountains, and it follows its majestic course from west to east in a deep valley through a strange and silent land full of mystery and charm, until it ultimately unites with the Slave River below Lake Athabaska, and passes down into that vast inland sea, Great Slave Lake, from which the mighty Mackenzie wends its silent way, if not "through caverns measureless to man, down to a sunless sea," at least through an endless wilderness, down to a sea that is sunless half the year.

In comparison with the Mackenzie the Peace is quite a southern river; it does not belong to the desolate wastes of the extreme North, but to a country which will one day be thickly populated, and that day is not very far distant.

Even the name Peace River has something of mystery about it. True, it was named after Peace, the lieutenant of the intrepid explorer Mackenzie, and the name is not, as one might imagine, the translation of some Indian name of legendary or

mystical significance. But the effect is there all the same; one imagines the stately flow of the great river mile after mile through a vast country inhabited only by bear and deer, and a few nomadic natives, some of whom still do not even nominally own allegiance to the British Crown, a country where civilization has not yet found a foothold, where the white man is represented only by a Hudson's Bay Company or a Revillon Frères factor here and there, an occasional Jesuit mission, or an outpost of that magnificent body the Royal North-West Mounted Police, who think nothing of riding a thousand miles or so to prove that the British Empire extends even into this remote region, and that British justice reigns even here.

And so the Peace River has flowed for countless thousands of years. Long before the first white man ever set eye on it, long before even the first red man arrived, it flowed in the same silent majesty as to-day. In the days when the bear came down to drink on the banks of the Thames he also came down to the banks of the Peace as he does now; the little Thames has changed, but the great Peace has remained the same through all these centuries.

But before many years have passed all this will be changed, the Peace River country will be one of the great granaries of the world, wheat will be shipped from the Peace to the Thames via the Pacific Coast ports and the Panama Canal; settlers are going in already by the hundred, two railways are being built from the Alberta side, and one will soon be started from British Columbia; in a very few years one will be able to admire the grandeur of the Peace River Pass from a comfortable seat in

an observation car, or from the deck of a tourist steamer!

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At present there are two ways of getting into this country, from above and from below; one may go to the headwaters of the Peace in Central British Columbia and descend in a canoe, or one may approach the river five hundred miles lower down, in Northern Alberta, and travel up-stream.

The most interesting and least laborious way is to do as I did, going in from above and coming out below, travelling with the stream all the way down.

The journey up from the coast through the Fraser River Cañon, on to Ashcroft, over the Cariboo Road to Soda Creek, and thence up the Fraser to Fort George, is full of interest, but as I have already described all this to you we will pass it over now. As usual, we had great trouble with the auto stage on the Cariboo road; they are very fine Napiers, but the conditions are so severe that it is no wonder there is always some trouble—the wonder is that there is not more. On this occasion the bearings heated fearfully, and we made very poor progress on the first day. Finally, about 5 p.m. the shaft of the auto broke, effectively putting a stop to our travelling for that day. Fortunately, we were within a mile of the Seventy Mile House, where we put up for the night. The chauffeur telephoned to Ashcroft for a new shaft to be sent out, and this arrived on a special auto at midnight, so that we got off again by 9.30 the following morning, reaching Soda Creek about twelve hours later.

The trip up the Fraser, through the Cottonwood

and Fort George Cañons, does not lose in interest by being repeated. About eight o'clock on the second morning a black object appeared floating down the stream, which, on approaching closer, was seen to be a raft with two men on board. This is quite a common method of travelling here, but dangerous on account of the rocks in the cañons. A great many men are leaving the Grand Trunk construction camps above Fort George, being dissatisfied with the conditions, and they make their way out to the outside world again by the cheapest means of conveyance available. Some of them don't even know that they have a tramp of nearly 170 miles before them after they reach Soda Creek, for the river is very rough beyond that point.[1]

Shortly after passing through the Fort George Cañon a man was seen on a rock in mid-stream, gesticulating wildly. By skilful manipulation and providential good luck the steamer was brought close alongside the rock, and the man jumped aboard as she passed, for the main deck of these steamers is very little above water level. It was a narrow squeak; he had not expected to leave that rock alive. With two companions he had set out on a raft from one of the camps above Fort George, but having got as far as this safely, the raft had been borne by the rushing waters against this rock in spite of all their efforts to guide it clear. All their dunnage had been swept overboard, and, thinking the raft would be smashed to pieces, this man had managed to scramble on to the rock, where he had been without food, his clothes soaked, since early morning. The other two men had stuck

[1] Written in 1912.

to the raft, which had held together, and passed out of his sight down into the cañon. Fortunately, we were able to tell him that they had passed safely through the cañon. No wonder he was thankful when the steamer came along, and vowed he would never trust himself on a raft again!

Unfortunately, such accidents are not uncommon; many lives are lost through men unacquainted with river navigation attempting to make the passage on rafts. It is a risky undertaking for an expert, and for novices nothing short of foolhardy. But the steamer trip is expensive, and they generally prefer the risk to the expense.

* * * * *

We are in Fort George now. "South" is still the principal scene of activity, and is in any case our most convenient stopping place, situated as it is on the bank of the Fraser, whereas "Central" is on the Nechaco, three miles farther up.

This is our jumping-off place; from here on we must find our own transportation. When the water is high enough small steamers run up the Fraser all the way to Tête Jaune Cache, but, the river being low after the recent dry spell, there are no boats running at present except an excursion trip on Sunday as far as the mouth of Willow River, twenty-five miles up. We have to go forty miles up the Fraser to Giscome Portage, where we pass over to the headwaters of the Peace, so we decide to take advantage of the excursion on Sunday for that portion of the distance.

The next thing to do is to try and get a canoe and an Indian to take us up as far as the Portage. On the other side it will be down-stream, and we

will be able to manage by ourselves until we reach McLeod, where another man is to join us; but as my companion, Mr. Williamson, is not very expert with a dugout, and I have never handled one before, we are not particularly anxious to face the Giscome Rapids by ourselves, and we go all through the rancheree to try and find a native to go with us. But every available man is employed on the G.T.P. construction, and we cannot get one to come except at an utterly exorbitant price, so we have to face the journey alone after all.

A dugout thirty-six feet long, hollowed out of a cottonwood log, is bought from an aged warrior for thirty dollars; he asked forty and came down to thirty-five, and would not agree to part with the canoe for less, but when I started counting out the money he took it eagerly. It was quite a high enough price for it. The value of a canoe depends to a great extent upon where it is bought; at the head of navigation on a river the price is at a maximum, at the lower end of the navigable part of a river canoes are almost given away with a pound of tea.

Our aged friend was not going to be outdone, however; there was only one paddle in the canoe, and as we required at least three, the others had to be bought separately. Two were produced, belonging to the old man's son, which he agreed to sell for a dollar each, but unfortunately, at that moment the son's wife appeared and demanded to know what was going on. On being told she expressed great indignation and contempt at her father-in-law's business capacity, affirming that the paddles, being of superior style of workmanship,

would not be sold for less than a dollar and a half apiece. To this she adhered firmly, expressing herself in very fluent and voluble language, which, unfortunately, had to be translated for us, and so no doubt lost much of its original beauty. She was ably seconded by another lady, who emerged from the shack behind her, and between them they made the old man look pretty small. Talk about suffragettes!

That being satisfactorily accomplished, and the canoe lodged on board the steamer, we have to buy provisions, cooking utensils, and all the various accessories for a trip which may last several months—for in going out into the bush it is necessary to provide against contingencies. Camping outfit we have brought with us, but provisions and accessories it is always best to get at the jumping-off place.

* * * * *

On the Sunday we travel up to Willow River with a gay crowd of excursionists, all in their Sunday best, while we are in our "digging clothes." All the youth and beauty of both South and Central is on board, to say nothing of the city magnates and their families. This steamer is a smaller edition of the *B.X.*, called *B.C. Express*; showing rather a lack of originality, as the former name is simply the popular abbreviation of the latter, which is the name of the company which runs these steamers and stages.

At Willow River our canoe is launched carelessly and half filled with water, which takes some time to bail out. It is rather embarrassing to start off before such a crowd; if it had been down-stream

S.S. "B.C. EXPRESS."

CANOE PORTAGE AT GISCOME.

ON CROOKED RIVER.

A QUIET SPOT.

To face p. 190

it would have been simple, but to paddle a heavily laden dugout up-stream is not so easy for those not used to such work.

So we spend as much time as possible in loading up our dunnage, and stowing everything snugly away in such a manner that the canoe will balance properly in the water, thus giving the excursionists time to disperse. But there is not much to see at Willow River except the G.T.P. construction camp, which is close by, and most of the people are soon spread out along the bank of the river, where they will have a good view of us as we go off. There are some, of course, armed with kodaks, who wait at the steamer to see us start.

At last all our dunnage is stowed away satisfactorily, and we cannot put off the fatal moment any longer, but have to take our places in the canoe, untie the painter, and paddle off with a look of unconcern which we are far from feeling.

To one new to it a dugout feels very much like a tightrope looks; it wobbles fearfully with the slightest movement. The under side is perfectly round and smooth, so that there is nothing to prevent it from tipping over sideways if the balance is disturbed. One soon gets into the way of not indulging in any side movement, and travelling is quite comfortable, but at first it is a very weird sensation; one is continually on tenterhooks, expecting every moment to find oneself in the water. If the log from which the canoe has been made is not perfectly straight and true, the dugout will be correspondingly uneven in outline, which makes her "cranky" and difficult to handle. Ours is not bad, but she is a little cranky.

We strike out boldly, and paddle for all we are worth, keeping close in to the shore so as to avoid the current. But before we have made a hundred yards the current catches her nose, and she swings round on us before we can do anything to prevent it. We are facing down-stream now, and drifting with the current, for we cannot paddle backwards to any effect. Rather an ignominious position in front of all those onlookers, but my companion has foreseen this contingency, and is prepared for it. With a few strokes we make the shore, where we get out and make fast a towline to the stern, which is now facing up-stream.

As there is scarcely any difference between the nose and the stern, it looks as if our undignified procedure had really been a skilful manœuvre to reverse the canoe for the purpose of lining her up. Anyway we don't attempt any more paddling against the stream, but line her up the rest of the way. One man scrambles along the shore, hauling on the line, while the other sits in the canoe and keeps the nose out from the shore by means of a pole. Where there is good going on the shore it is easy work, but in some places it is very rough going. About four miles up we camp for the night.

The following morning we reach the foot of Giscome Rapids, and here we have been told that we must cross over to the other bank. It is with considerable trepidation that we strike out into the stream, being afraid that our canoe will swing round as she did before, and that we will lose a great deal of ground in crossing. It is about four hundred yards across here; the far shore looks a very long way off when one is so close down to the water,

and the water in between is sweeping down at a fearful rate. Why, we may be carried down a couple of miles before we can make the other side!

As we expected, we have not got far out into the stream before our nose is swung round and we are floating merrily down with the current. But we have got to get across, and don't want to be carried back to Willow River in the process, so, very carefully, one at a time, we turn round in our places so as to face up-stream once more, and, having safely accomplished this feat, we again proceed to wield the paddles. Strangely enough she does not swing round on us again, but allows us to maintain her nose at a slight angle to the stream, so that the force of the current carries her across, while our paddling prevents us from losing too much ground.

Now we are in mid-stream and the water is rushing past at a tremendous pace. It looks bad enough from the upper deck of a steamer, but when you are right down in it the current is something fierce. But we keep her nose over, and the current carries us across rapidly; the smooth water on the other side is within a hundred yards of us now; we will soon be there, and we have not lost such an awful lot of ground yet. We feel happier now that we have got past the worst of it, and can see our goal rapidly getting nearer.

The comparatively smooth water and eddies extend for about fifty yards out from the shore; there is a sharp line showing where the current ceases, and we are now within a few yards of this line. Now we have crossed it, and although the water here is moving down at a fairly good pace, it is nothing in comparison to the current in mid-

stream, and we can take it easy now. Another couple of minutes and we have reached the shore, and on looking round we are agreeably surprised to find that we have lost less than half a mile in crossing.

It is lunch-time now, and we feel quite ready for lunch after our exertions. Then we resume the process of lining up the bank, and are soon in the rapids. There is nothing in the way of a cataract here, the so-called rapids consisting of a portion of the river-bed thickly strewn with large boulders, among which the water rushes with great violence, but along the right bank there is a comparatively smooth channel, up which it is possible to line without very much difficulty. We have not reached the end of the rapids when darkness falls, and we have to camp again.

On the morning of the third day we reach Giscome, where we have to leave the Fraser and portage across the intervening seven and a half miles to Summit Lake, one of the headwaters of the Peace River. This short distance separates the waters which flow to the Pacific from those which flow into the Arctic Ocean. This being a regular canoe route, there is a wagon-road across the portage, and they have specially constructed wagons to take canoes over.

The flies are very troublesome during the day at this season, so they are only working the teams by night, and we have to wait until evening before getting across. Meanwhile we are objects of great interest to little Ada Mary, the seven-year-old daughter of the rancher who runs the portage. She makes up her mind that she will accompany us

across the portage, and on being turned back she disappears into the house weeping bitterly.

Another party arrives that day, two members of the United States Biological Survey on their way into the North country. They have come down the Fraser from Tête Jaune Cache in a magnificent Peterborough canoe loaded with specimen cases and other paraphernalia. As there is only one team working they have to wait until the following night, and we see no more of them.

The tramp across the portage in the late evening is pleasant, and that night we sleep in the warehouse on the shore of Summit Lake, surrounded by hanging hams, sides of bacon and sacks of oats, and accompanied by lots of mice. But it was not worth while opening up our dunnage and pitching camp in the dark.

From here on it is to be all down-stream, and we are content.

* * * * *

In the morning we start out on our hundred-mile paddle down the Crooked River to McLeod, and never has a river so well deserved its name as this one, for the distance is a little over fifty miles as the crow flies ; in places, after a detour of several miles you come back within a few yards almost of the same trees you saw an hour before !

Summit Lake is a delightful sheet of water of irregular shape, about six miles long, surrounded by undulating hills, densely timbered. In the distance is Teapot Mountain, our landmark in finding the outlet from the lake.

At one point on the shore we see smoke, and on landing it turns out to be a camp ; the fire

warden is coming up this way to attend to several reported forest fires. He has a large area to look after, and it is a pretty hard job after a long dry spell, for fires get started somehow or other in all sorts of places.

Keeping Teapot Mountain on our left we pass out of the lake into peaceful little Crooked River, a hundred feet wide, with reeds and water-lilies growing in abundance in the still water. An idyllic spot this for a summer holiday resort, and no doubt there will be a tourist hotel here when the railway comes.

The trip down Crooked River is worth living for ; it can be done in three days, but more comfortably in four. In places the stream is not more than six feet wide, a little brooklet with rapidly running water, and one has a job to keep the nose of the canoe from jamming in the bank. Frequently one has to bend double in order to avoid the overhanging branches of the willows and alders which nearly meet above. It is a tricky thing guiding the canoe past snags in the stream and watching that one is not swept overboard by a trailing branch.

The river is generally from thirty to fifty feet wide in this part, but one has to watch the channel, as there are lots of boulders and many riffles and bars. In many places the stones have been taken out from the channel and ranged along either side of it as a guide in low water. Then, at the sharp bends, it is impossible to prevent the nose of the canoe from charging the bank. Then look out for your head while you prize her out ! The branches come sweeping down close to the

"A PLACE FOR A LAZY HOLIDAY."

McLEOD'S LAKE POST.

To face p. 196.

water; sometimes you have to seize a branch and pull on that.

In these narrow parts there is a good current and we go merrily along, but watch the channel well! If her nose sticks between two rocks and she swings round, then it is all up: our stuff will all be in the water in a jiffy unless we jump out and hold her in time. In these places the paddles are laid aside and the poles are used.

But in some places this tiny little streamlet spreads out over a width of two or three hundred feet in a beautiful flat meadow. The banks are generally lined with willows, and sometimes the bottom land is densely overgrown with them. In these parts the water is dead; it is a case of constant paddling for miles and miles. What a place for a lazy holiday!

Sometimes the river divides up into several sloughs, and it is impossible to tell which is the channel; one may follow a slough [1] for a mile or more, and then have to turn back and look for another way. By carefully observing the direction in which the long grass under the surface is bent it is generally possible to discover the course of the stream, but it is often impossible to detect any deflection at all in the grass. One might easily get lost among the sloughs.

* * * * *

On the second day we meet three large boats being rowed up-stream. They are Hudson's Bay boats coming up from McLeod to the portage for supplies. That is how everything goes into that remote country. These boats go backwards and forwards between the two points throughout the

[1] Pronounced "slew."

season. They make the round trip in a week; there is not much difference between the trip down-stream and that up-stream, there is so much dead water, but it must be rather a job to take those big boats over some of the riffles.

Beyond these we see no human beings until we reach McLeod, for this glorious country is entirely uninhabited. But most of the land along the river has been taken up within the last few years.

A number of lakes are strung along the course of the river, and navigation on these is not always a picnic, for a wind is liable to spring up, raising a swell in five minutes sufficient to swamp a canoe. One has to follow one shore, crossing over as rapidly as possible from one point to the next, and where a bay is a couple of miles wide it is necessary to paddle hard if there is any sign of wind. If one gets caught in the open the only thing to do is to keep her nose well into the waves; a little water shipped can be bailed out, but if she gets caught broadside on it is a bad look-out!

In the lakes, again, it is easy to get lost; one may go down a deep bay and search about among the reeds for the outlet for hours, and finally have to come back a mile or two and try another bay. We were told of two men who spent four days trying to find the outlet of one of these lakes!

The scenery is simply glorious; here is a broad sheet of water with golden water-lilies and bulrushes fringing the side, rich green meadows stretching back from the bank to where the tall poplars and cottonwoods form a fitting background to the peaceful scene; then we come to a steep bank covered with rich dark green jack-pines,

the yellow green of this spring's growth tipping each bunch of needles and giving a charming effect, and the paler green of the tamarack adding variety ; the bank closely lined with willows, here and there a great cottonwood with its rich grey bark and shining leaves. Then we pass through a narrow gorge and see nothing but the luxuriant growth of the alders above us on either side. Again we come to a broad meadow, an ideal pasturage, with no living thing to pasture there—at least no creature shows itself to us. In many of these meadows there is a profusion of wild oats, an earnest of what this fertile valley will produce when it is brought under cultivation.

At intervals along the banks camping-grounds are seen, but these are best avoided, especially the Indian ones. We choose a level spot and make our own camp at dusk, pitching our 7 by 7 oiled silk, mosquito-proof tent, and cooking our supper, which we eat before we unroll our blankets, as these serve for seats at mealtime. Wood and water we always have in abundance. Then we sleep the sleep of the just, and rise at 5.30, make our breakfast, pack up, and get off by 7.30 for another day's enjoyment.

This is a bad country for mosquitoes and black flies, but, owing to the exceptionally dry season, we are troubled very little by them.

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On the fourth morning out from Summit Lake we rise at four and make a start by six o'clock, for we want to reach McLeod, and the greater part of our journey to-day is along McLeod's Lake, which means paddling continuously with no stream to help

us. The lake is some sixteen miles long, and in crossing one bay four or five miles wide we are overtaken by a sudden squall; great waves are lashed up in a moment, white tops all round. We head into the bay as much as we dare and paddle for all we are worth, cutting through the waves. We must be two miles from the nearest shore, and we dare not head any more into the bay or we would get the waves broadside on and the canoe would be swamped in an instant. It is a ticklish position; the length of the canoe is so great that she cuts through several waves, and a good bit of water comes in over the bows. We paddle on for dear life, without respite, and it certainly is hard work, when you are not used to it, to paddle hard for a long time without a spell. Presently the wind abates a little, and after a few minutes there is an appreciable improvement in the water; the white tops begin to disappear, but the waves are still running pretty high. Cautiously we edge a little farther into the bay, and after another twenty-five minutes' paddling we get into sheltered waters and can at last take a spell. My back is aching, and it is a blessed relief to be able to sit down again and rest, for when paddling hard we rise off the seats, erect on our knees in the bottom of the canoe so as to get a better purchase.

Then McLeod is reached at last; we see the Hudson's Bay post with its flagpole, the native village and the little church, for the Jesuits have been all over this Northern country for many a year. This is one of the oldest Hudson's Bay posts in British Columbia; it is over a hundred years old.

Here we find Norwegian Gus, who has come over

ON PARSNIP RIVER.

GUS EXAMINES THE HEAD OF FINLAY RAPIDS.

To face p. 200.

from his home on Stuart Lake and has been waiting a week for us. And a fine fellow he turns out to be. Since he came up into the North country twelve years ago he has never had a hat on his head, and as I never wear a hat in the bush, rain or fine, we are a pair. His head, with its shock of fair hair, handsome features, blue eyes and unkempt beard, reminds one of a great St. Bernard dog, magnificent in its animal beauty. A face that one instinctively trusts, feeling confident that whatever difficulties and dangers the journey may have in store, we will be safe with Gus. An expert woodsman, and absolute master of a canoe, resourceful and daring, yet always prudent, never foolhardy. To hear him talk you would think he was the veriest tyro, such is the innate modesty of conscious strength; not the affected modesty of one who seeks for admiration, but the real modesty of one who proves his worth in deeds, not words. A man of clean life, abstaining from whisky and the other vices which are usually considered indispensable from life in the wilds.

Such is the man who is to be our companion down the Peace River, a rough diamond if ever there was one, and not so rough either, but gentle and refined in his conversation.

* * * * *

It is Saturday afternoon when we reach McLeod, and we stay there over Sunday, making preparations for the journey, washing our clothes, for it is a week since we left Fort George; and Gus bakes a batch of bread in the oven at the Hudson's Bay post.

A strange life, that of a Hudson's Bay factor, living

alone with only a few Indians for company. Most of them marry *klooches*, many dispensing with the sanction of the Church on the union, but this man is still a bachelor. There is another white man in the place, the priest, but he travels about a lot in his large parish, and is not very much at home here. In any case he is a French-Canadian who speaks imperfect English, and the Hudson's Bay men, who are generally Scotchmen, have little dealing with the priests at any time. Some of them are regular cranks, preferring their solitude, and resenting the intrusion of other white men into their domains, but most of them are glad enough to see a white face now and then, and to be able to talk about the great world outside which seems so far away.

Much has taken place in the world since this post was established here over a hundred years ago, but here it is very much the same as it was then—the strong log building with its outhouses, the vegetable garden enclosed by a rail fence, the flagstaff upon which the Union Jack is hoisted on Sundays, the native village with its little church, the priest travelling around in his canoe over hundreds of miles, visiting his scattered flock—all these must be very much as they were a century ago.

But it will not long be so quiet, for land is being taken up all through the North country ; a railway will soon pass through here on the way to the Peace River, and the fertile valleys will come under the plough. Even now there is a survey party encamped on the opposite side of the Pack River ; they have been away up the Finlay, whose broad

valley will afford homes for many thousands in a few years.

In the afternoon an Indian comes to us with samples of ore which he has brought from somewhere away to the east, beyond the Parsnip River, apparently across the divide; he wants us to go and examine the place, which he says is rich in mineral, but we have no time, and we have heard such tales before. The samples are nothing out of the way.

* * * * *

The Pack River flows out of McLeod's Lake; it is a good-sized stream, but in many places there are riffles over which the canoe has to be dragged, wading in the shallow water.

And what beautiful green meadows we pass through, lightly timbered with poplar and birch; one looks in vain for the Jersey cows to complete the scene. But these too will come soon.

Then we come to Tootage Lake; on the nearer shore there is a splash and a rustle, and a fine black bear disappears into the bush.

By the evening we reach the confluence of the Pack and Parsnip Rivers. The latter is a large, rapidly flowing stream with turbid waters, running north-west in the great valley which parallels the Rocky Mountains for six hundred miles, being occupied successively by many different rivers. The Parsnip, flowing north-west, and the Finlay, flowing south-east, unite to form the mighty Peace River, which breaks through the Rockies, flowing due east.

We make good time, paddling with the stream, averaging forty miles a day, and two more days bring us nearly to the fork of the Parsnip and

Finlay Rivers. Once we see a camp, and find it is two prospectors who have run short of supplies and are going out to McLeod to replenish their stock. They are laboriously lining their canoe up-stream, and one man has hurt his foot, so they have to lay off for a couple of days.

In places the river sweeps round, forming a cutbank, two or three hundred feet high, of clay and sandy material. The softer beds are riddled with holes, the abodes of birds of the swallow type. At one point an enormous cat stares at us from the bank, and runs along watching us. It is a lynx, an ugly-looking brute to meet unarmed.

* * * * *

As we approach the head of the Peace River, Mount Selwyn comes into view. It is not very high, something over six thousand feet, not even the highest peak in the immediate neighbourhood, but it marks the portal of the Peace River Pass. We have to paddle all round two sides of it, and our next camp will be on the bank of the Peace under its shade.

There are two great rapids on the Peace River—Finlay Rapids, where it enters the mountains, a mile below the confluence of the Parsnip and Finlay Rivers, and Parle Pas Rapids, where it leaves the mountains, forty miles lower down.

Sweeping round past the mouth of the Finlay, on this rapidly moving sheet of water, half a mile wide, one begins to feel anxious about the swirling rapids so close below. But Gus is there, and he knows the river, so all is well.

Now the roar of the rapids ahead becomes more distinct; from a distant murmur, hardly distin-

guishable above the rush of the waters close by, it grows imperceptibly to a loud roar, drowning all other sounds.

Great jagged rocks are seen ahead all across the river; woe betide the luckless canoe that is swept down there! We must be careful, and make the shore before it is too late; if we once get among the first rocks we will be swept on irresistibly like a straw, and no boat could live in those waters; if she was not dashed against the rocks she would be swamped before going fifty yards.

Nearer and nearer are the rocks, louder and louder is the roar; it is deafening, we can hardly hear each other speak. See the spray on the rocks; look at the boiling eddies among them! What a frightful place; God help us if we once get down there! Can we make the shore now? Will we not be carried down between those two black rocks where the water is pouring through so fiercely? The water for many yards on either side seems to converge on that one gap; it is rushing through with incredible fury. And look at the seething mass just beyond; there is a rock just below the surface right in the middle of the channel. No canoe could live for ten seconds in that! Or if we manage to keep out of the frightful suction of that appalling death-trap, we might get down on the far side of that big rock mass. What would it feel like when the canoe, carried along like a straw in that raging torrent, strikes that smooth, round rock and is swept round and overturned? Or if we can keep her on the comb of the water and get her nose in between that rock and the next, and are carried down into the seething whirl-

pool below? There must be a drop of at least two feet there; the nose will go under and we will be struggling in the icy water, lucky if our heads are dashed against the rocks at once! What a death!

Gus has raised himself on his knees, and is carefully watching the river ahead. Now it is time to turn into the shore, and with a few swift strokes of the paddle we are in still water close to the shore, which we reach without further ado. Standing up on dry land, the rocks are seen to be still a long way off; I might have known that Gus knew his business, and would not venture an inch farther than was absolutely safe!

Keeping close in to the shore we go down some way yet, and then out with the line; and with one man in the canoe to guide her, we let her right down to the beginning of the rapids.

Now comes the portage. We unload all the dunnage and carry it down a few hundred yards. Then we return to the canoe, and Gus wades out into the stream to see if it is possible to line her down part of the way, as it is a laborious process dragging even an empty canoe over the rocks, and it does no good to the canoe either.

When the water is high it is easy enough to get past here, and generally, even in the dry season, it is possible to line all the way down, but the water is so exceptionally low this summer that rocks which Gus has never seen before are high out of the water now, and the problem is much more difficult.

After due consideration he decides on a course, and we shove her out into the stream, Gus guiding her from the rocks with a pole, or wading breast

THE PORTAGE, FINLAY RAPIDS.

IN SMOOTH WATER AGAIN.

IN PEACE RIVER PASS.

To face p. 206.

deep in the water, guiding her nose in between the rocks, not letting her go out too far from the side. Williamson, too, wades out in the deep water part of the time. I hold on to the line with might and main, keeping the stern from swinging out, and that is no easy job when the nose is guided round outside a rock, and the current catches her on the inner side.

Now we come to a jagged point of rock where the water boils past, falling over a ledge four or five feet high into a seething whirlpool below. Beyond that is a chaos of rocks and white, boiling foam. We cannot line the canoe past that! So we have to portage her, dragging her across the rocks, using all the pieces of timber we can collect as skids, for not only is it very hard work dragging the canoe over the rough rocks, but the sharp points are liable to injure her.

Then we come to the place where we can line her down several hundred yards more, but again a portage is necessary, and the dragging process is repeated until finally, after about half a mile, she is landed in smooth water and Finlay Rapids are safely passed.

Then we go back and fetch the dunnage, making several trips, for there is a lot, what with food, blankets, axes, instruments, cooking utensils and so on; and then it is time for lunch, and we feel that we have earned it—and if I have earned mine, what about Williamson and Gus, who are soaked through! But it is all part of the day's work, and after a good meal and a rest, and drying out a little, we start out for the afternoon's paddling.

* * * * *

That afternoon we only make about eight miles, and camp early under the shadow of Mount Selwyn. We are now in the Pass, surrounded by steep mountains rising three or four thousand feet up from the river. The peaks have all been rounded by glacial action; there is none of the ruggedness which is characteristic of the mountains in Southern British Columbia, no sharp points, no glaciers, no snow except a small patch or two here and there, for the altitudes are not great here. The Peace River Pass is only two thousand feet above sea-level, whereas the main line of the C.P.R. passes through the Kicking Horse Pass at an elevation of five thousand five hundred feet, and farther south, in the States, the passes are very much higher still.

But, in spite of its less rugged character, the scenery here is magnificent. What could be more awe-inspiring than to float down this great river, smooth and peaceful now, with no trace of its recent fury, great blue-grey mountains on either side, with yellow-green patches of grass shining in the sun wherever the surface is flat enough for soil to rest? Here and there a clump of trees, a solitary pine clinging to an inaccessible precipice; one wonders where it can get a hold for its roots. And in the valley bottom, wherever there is a little flat ground, a magnificent grove of cottonwoods. Above all the deep blue sky, and the reflection of the whole scene in the placid waters of the river.

And to think of the untold ages during which the river has flowed in solemn majesty through this great cleft in the mountain range, to think of the millions of years it has taken to cut this

pass out of the solid rock which barred its way: what a pigmy man is in comparison!

But man has been scratching the face of the earth even here; on the flank of Mount Selwyn are the remains of an abandoned mining prospect. During the Klondike rush in 1898-9 many parties went in by the overland route from Edmonton, travelling up the Peace and Finlay Rivers, and away across the wilds to the north. Many never reached the Yukon; how many perished on the road will never be known, but some found an attractive proposition on the way, and went no farther. Those who located the auriferous mass on Mount Selwyn did a lot of work, bringing elaborate assaying plant in, but that plant is all that is left now; the prospect never paid—it was one of the many white elephants scattered all over British Columbia.

A magnificent view of this end of the Pass is obtained from even a little way up the mountain, but the atmosphere is very hazy on account of forest fires throughout the country, and our view is limited on that account.

On the opposite bank is a limestone mountain with a large cavern near the top, known as "Hole-in-the-Wall Mountain." On the river bank at the base of this we formed a cache and left some provisions for the use of my two companions on their return journey; for they are coming back up-stream, and it is no use carrying things all the way down and then up again—it is hard enough work taking a canoe up-stream in any case, without carrying any more weight than is absolutely necessary.

The cache is formed either by building a plat-

form across the tree boughs ten or twelve feet from the ground, and placing the goods on this, well covered over, or else by hanging them in sacks at a sufficient height from the ground to be out of reach of bear. In either case it is impossible to be quite safe from that persevering and ubiquitous pest, the wood-rat; nothing but canned goods are safe from that, as we found later on.

* * * * *

The passage through the Pass is one of the finest parts of the trip. One day there will be excursion steamers taking sight-seers up as far as the foot of the rapids, possibly past them, for a liberal use of dynamite may make a channel even through both the Finlay and Parle Pas Rapids. The trip is far grander than anything on the Rhine or the Elbe. This will surely be one of the most famous tourist resorts in the West; one can imagine the Mount Selwyn Hotel thronged with visitors from all parts of the continent!

The Parle Pas Rapids are not quite so furious as the Finlay—there is a channel of a sort along the left bank—but their great danger lies in the fact that they give no warning; you do not hear their roar until you are close upon them, hence the name *Rapide qui ne Parle pas* ("The rapid which does not speak").

We camp above the rapids, and examine them in the evening. In the morning we manage to line the canoe all the way down, only portaging the most valuable part of our dunnage as a precaution. Then we paddle down-stream all the rest of the day between rounded foot-hills which rise to a height of one to two thousand feet above

MOUNT SELWYN.

HOLE-IN-THE-WALL MOUNTAIN.

To face p. 210.

the river, for the rapids mark the end of the mountains.

The river is not swift here, and numerous eddies and backwashes greatly retard our progress, so that it is late in the evening before we have covered the forty-five miles to the head of the Cañon of the Mountain of Rocks, as the Peace River Cañon is called. At one place the river widens out to a couple of miles in width, but it is generally three to four hundred yards wide.

There has once been a great lake here, the progress of the river being barred by a mountain chain, but a deep cañon has been cut through this, over twenty miles long, with a fall of 250 feet in that distance. The first nine miles is between vertical walls, three hundred feet high in places, then comes an interval of comparatively open country, and below that about eight miles more of cañon, not quite so deep as the upper part.

When the river is in flood it must be a sight for the gods to see the mighty torrent raging down between those walls; the water at the cañon head rises to a height of forty feet above its present level.

But, high water or low, no boat has ever passed through the cañon; if a canoe drifts into it, nothing but matchwood comes out at the other end.

There are a few places where it is possible to scramble down into the bottom of the cañon, and, in the present very low state of the water, we can walk for miles along the rock ledges and coarse gravel beaches in the bottom.

At one place two little islands stand in the middle of the stream, with vertical sides, their tops densely

covered with spruce and fir. A scene of strange fascination, those two islets—or I should say three, for there is a smaller one, almost bare, just below—holding their own with the mighty torrent rushing past them, the cliff on the far side rising sheer three hundred feet. The tall fir-trees down there on the islands look like little toy trees out of a Noah's Ark!

* * * * *

At the cañon head we cache our stuff, and take what we want for a few days at a time, packing it on our backs—grub, cooking apparatus, instruments, and our blankets and tent. During our absence the wood-rats are busy; they have a special predilection for leather, and invariably gnaw straps or belts in two, spoil one boot out of each pair, and do all the damage they can in a given time. They also break into as many different sacks as possible, and take a nibble at everything—beans, rice, dried fruits, candles.

My geological investigations necessitate following some of the tributary creeks for a number of miles. Travelling is not always easy. One comes to a fall of twenty or thirty feet, and cannot get up except by retracing one's steps for half a mile, clambering up the side of the gully, which may be three or four hundred feet deep, and making a way through the timber, across ravines and through dense brush in places, until some place is discovered where it is possible to descend into the gully above the fall. Perhaps after getting nearly down into the bottom we come to a vertical drop off of fifty feet, and have to clamber up again and look for another place to make the descent.

The first time we return to the cañon head we have the luck to meet a settler from Hudson's Hope who owns a number of packhorses, so we make arrangements for the transport of our dunnage across the portage when we have finished at this end. It is a fairly good pack trail, and only fourteen miles across, the river making a detour of twenty-seven miles between this and the Hope.

On the day fixed we meet the settler, who is accompanied by his *klooch,* a picturesque-looking copper-faced lady riding astride a mule and smoking a corncob pipe. But she strongly objects to the camera.

Hudson's Hope consists of two pairs of log buildings, belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company and Revillon Frères respectively, but neither occupied at the moment. The Indians are all away hunting, and the factors are sometimes withdrawn from some of the smaller posts during the off season. A few settlers have taken up land here within the last couple of years, and, although there is a good bit of clearing to do anywhere on the north side of the river, they have been industrious and have already the tidy beginnings of ranches. On the south side of the river the flat valley bottom extends back for a couple of miles, a splendid townsite, which has already been seized upon by speculators, a number of whom have "squatted" on land and built log cabins, remaining on it long enough to fulfil the legal requirements for a homestead, for this is in the "Dominion Block," where settlers can get land free by complying with the requirements. A number of fine sites have been taken up along the lower part of the cañon, and these will make magnificent

residential locations when there really is a city here. It has already been re-christened Cañon City, the old name, Hudson's Hope, not being considered sufficiently classy.

From here down the river is navigable for 550 miles, to the Vermilion Falls away down towards the northern boundary of Alberta, and it is conceivable that grain may in future be shipped up the river from all the great lower Peace River country as far as here, and thence by rail to the Pacific Coast. Cañon City is certainly in an important position, being at the head of a stretch of 550 miles of navigable river passing through a land which will before many years have passed be literally "flowing with milk and honey." There are moreover extensive deposits of excellent coal in the neighbourhood. It is not impossible that the Finlay and Parle Pas Rapids may be rendered navigable, and the narrow and shallow portions of the Crooked and Pack Rivers widened and dredged so as to form a continuous waterway from the head of the cañon to Summit Lake, a distance of three hundred miles.

Greater things than this have been done elsewhere; who knows what developments will take place here during the next hundred years? We will not live to see it, but one day Cañon City may rank among the foremost cities of the Great West.

In imagination I see this place a hundred years hence; a beautiful city spreads out over the valley, rich in architectural beauty, for the day of the hideous sky-scraper is over, and the monotonous, interminable, rectangular block system has also dis-

appeared, the streets being laid out in a way that takes advantage of the natural configuration of the ground, parks and gardens being a prominent feature. To the east are numerous great factories, for the immense power of the water in the cañon has been harnessed. The coal-mines on Johnstone Creek, twelve miles away, supply half the prairie provinces. Steamers ply busily on both the lower and the upper stretches of the river, and railways radiate from here in all directions; the Peace River country is a network of railway lines, which collect the harvests and bring the grain to the point of shipment. Electric cars convey the tourists to the brink of the cañon, and they can see all its wonders for ten cents, passing on the way the beautiful residences dotted along the lower cañon. The fine hotel at the foot of Mount Selwyn is a favourite resort for a summer holiday or a week-end jaunt. A non-stop aeroplane runs daily to Winnipeg, another to Chicago, and another to Vancouver, besides those which stop at intermediate points. To Prince George, formerly called Fort George, there is a frequent and rapid service. There are many other large cities in this northern country, and the rivalry between Cañon City and Dunvegan is great.

* * * * *

But we must return from these dreams to the present. There are two steamers now running on the river, one belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, and the other to the "Diamond P," the company which owns the flour-mills at Vermilion. We are told that the former is expected to make one more trip up to Hudson's Hope about the middle

of the month (August). It has been making three or four trips a season in recent years. So I arrange to be ready for it; that will greatly simplify the problem of getting out from here.

We make one more trip out for four days, taking two packhorses. That is much better than packing the things on our backs, and there is a trail for about twelve miles in the direction we want to go. The trail is pretty good, but the horses frequently stumble over roots, and sometimes they step right on a hornets' nest, when there is liable to be trouble!

The flat valley bottom, and many patches among the hills around the lower part of the cañon, consist of beautiful meadow-land, dotted with small poplars and birches; long grass, breast high very often, beautiful flowers, cranberries in profusion—a delightful country, like one vast park. On the high ground beyond the valley, which is from seven hundred to a thousand feet deep, from here on right down into Alberta, there is a prairie—beautiful, endless, rolling prairie, the country upon which all eyes are now turned as the country of the future. The prairies of the United States, of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Southern Alberta are becoming gradually filled up, and people are already beginning to look farther afield. This vast country alone remains in North America, in very truth the Last Great West.

And the climate, what of that? There is an impression that away up here in the North the climate must be very severe. But it is no worse than in the present settled areas, for the isothermal lines bend northwards as the Rocky Mountains are approached, and the Peace River corresponds

PEACE RIVER CAÑON.

THE SIDE CREEKS HAVE DEEP RAVINES TOO.

To face p. 216.

roughly to Southern Manitoba in climate. It is well known that the finest wheat in the world is the Manitoba Hard, a variety which has been produced by growing wheat as near to the Northern limit of its cultivation as possible, and this has been grown experimentally with great success on the Peace River.

Away down at Vermilion, it is true, the crop is very often a failure, but there is a vast area of country much farther south than that. The worst thing is not the cold, but the fear of insufficient rain ; it may happen that in exceptionally dry years such as this there may be a drought. That is the only drawback, and it is one which this country shares with many others which are thriving wheat producers.

* * * * *

The middle of August has come and gone, but there is no sign of the steamer. We are back in camp on the south bank of the river opposite the Hope. Some of the squatters, whose homesteads have been surveyed, and who have received their certificates from the surveyor, are going down the river on rafts. With luck they will traverse the 240 miles to Peace River Crossing in five or six days. It is cheaper than the steamer, but not quite so comfortable. There is no danger, however, for any one at all familiar with river navigation ; it is not like the Fraser between Fort George and Quesnel !

Gus is busy baking a "grindstone." That is the kind of bread we have been using ever since leaving McLeod. A fire is allowed to burn for three or four hours, so as to heat the ground well, then some

dough is made with baking-powder, placed in one gold pan and covered over with another. The remains of the fire are scraped away, and a hole dug in the hot ground, in which the gold-pans are buried, the embers being scraped back over them. After an hour or so a loaf of very palatable bread is produced, which from its shape is universally known as a "grindstone." It is better than bannocks, being lighter, and one can make much more at a time, but when one is in a hurry a bannock made in the frying-pan before the fire is the thing.

Meanwhile Williamson and I paddle across to where a raft is being loaded to start down in the evening. A black speck appears round a bend down the river. It is getting larger and moving distinctly. All field glasses are brought into requisition, and it is seen to be a canoe, and a figure is walking alongside on the shore. As it comes nearer we distinguish a man sitting in the canoe, an Indian; the other is lining her up.

Great excitement prevails; conjectures are rife as to who the arrival can be. At last he is here, and turns out to be the mail-carrier from Fort St. John, forty-five miles down the river, the headquarters of the Peace River District of British Columbia.

There is no news of the steamer; he doesn't think she will come up again this season beyond St. John. He has brought the mail overland to St. John from Beaver Lodge, to which point it had been brought from Edson, on the Grand Trunk Pacific, a fearful journey over muskeg country.

He is starting back after supper, and, in view of

the uncertainty of the steamer, I arrange to travel down with him to St. John, so I hastily return to camp and pack up my things. The tent I leave with the others, taking only a *kybosh,* or mosquito-proof shelter, to go over my blankets.

Then I bid farewell to my two companions, with great regret, as our time together has been very pleasant, and it makes all the difference in the world on a trip in the wilds when you have congenial companions. But Gus has to get back to Stuart Lake, and one man cannot travel up the river alone, so Williamson will accompany him as far as McLeod, and then make the trip up the Crooked River by himself.

* * * * *

So at seven o'clock we start off. Four miles down we pass through Hell's Gate, a point where two rocks hem in the river, but not a very alarming place in spite of its name. Then we camp at dusk. It is fine and tents are not needed. We have none in any case. The next day we drift lazily down-stream. There is much singing, but little paddling, for why should you paddle when the stream will carry you? The Indian has little idea of the value of time.

The mail-carrier speaks excellent English, and tells me a lot about the objects of interest we pass. Presently he produces a newspaper of quarto size and peruses it carefully. It is written in Cree, for which language an alphabet has been invented, with strange and weird letters, some like ours, some like Russian, some entirely new, to represent the extra-ordinary sounds occurring in that language, which is the lingua franca of the country from the Rockies

to Hudson's Bay, as the artificial trade jargon known as Chinook is throughout the Pacific slope.

As we approach St. John there are a few settlers' cabins along the bank, for people are coming into this country already. At one place is an exceptionally well-built log house, and, walking along the bank in front is a girl; she can't be more than sixteen. That is the house of a young American rancher from Dakota, and the girl is his sister. His grandmother is also there; she is over eighty, and a lady of independent means, who could live in comfort back East if she liked, but she prefers a pioneering life with her grandchildren. That is the kind of people that make a country!

In the afternoon St. John is reached. This metropolis of the Peace River District consists of a Hudson's Bay post, a Revillon post, a North-West Mounted Police station, at the moment unoccupied, one rancher's cabin, and a few Indian teepees.

All the Indians throughout this country are nomadic; they have no fixed place of abode. In the summer they hunt and fish; in the winter they trap.

The Hudson's Bay Company's factor kindly places at my disposal a little shack in which to have my meals, but for sleeping I prefer the open, putting up the *kybosh* over my blankets in case of rain. The mail-carrier has to go off to Beaver Lodge again next week, so that he could not take me down the river, and I am not sufficiently expert with a canoe to go alone, and all the Indians are away hunting, so I am forced to wait with patience for the steamer, which may arrive any day now. The rancher offers to build me a raft, and I contemplate

that means of conveyance, but give up the idea, as in some places there are several channels, and I might take the wrong channel and come to a bar which I could not get across, which would mean going back up-stream perhaps for a mile or more, and that would be very laborious single-handed, if possible at all.

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The effects of the dry summer are more evident here than up among the foot-hills; the prairie has a dried-up appearance. There is a good crop of wild hay, however, which is harvested every year. Potatoes are grown in quantity in the vicinity of the settlement, and in the garden attached to the Hudson's Bay post there are lots of vegetables, and even some healthy-looking tobacco plants. These, of course, are only for experiment, to see how they will grow. But tobacco is actually grown for use at Lesser Slave Lake.

The manager of the Revillon Frères post has a young bear for a pet, quite quiet and playful, but when it gets older he intends to shoot it! He is also the postmaster, and in the Dead Letter Department are some curiosities. One letter was addressed to the secretary of the Golf Club at St. John B.C., where there are just three white men! No doubt a mistake for St. John, N.B., on the other side of the continent—such a difference do two little letters make.

From the prairie, seven hundred feet above the river, I watch for the steamer. On the second day I see something moving, a patch of smoke fifteen miles down the river, and fix my binoculars on it. Yes, it certainly is getting bigger, and that is surely

something black just coming round that bend in the river. At last I shall be able to get on! I wonder whether she will go up to the Hope or turn back from here; if she goes up there it will mean at least another full day's waiting here.

Again I look; that black patch doesn't seem to have moved much; in fact, I believe it is still in exactly the same place as when I first observed it. Repeated observations, prolonged over half an hour, establish beyond a doubt that the black object is a fixture, and not the steamer at all. The patch of smoke, whatever it was, has disappeared, and I must resign myself to a further indefinite period of waiting.

On returning to the post I see a tent not far from my *kybosh*, and a number of horses. It is the Indian agent, who has been away up the Hay River country getting the Indians to sign the treaty, for there are still some tribes who have not signed their allegiance to the British Crown, which insures their being looked after by the representatives of that Crown, and never allowed to starve in a bad season. He has a pack train, about a dozen horses, and is going across to the Pine River country to the south.

One day I come in and find the whole population of the place collected on the river bank, very much excited over something. It is a large brown bear that has come down to drink on the opposite side of the river, but he is not accustomed to so many spectators, and moves off before any rifle can be got out.

* * * * *

After four days of waiting I begin to reconsider

THE ISLANDS, PEACE RIVER CAÑON.

To face p. 222.

the raft proposition. The stage leaves Peace River Crossing every Thursday, and if I miss the next one I shall probably have to wait there a week. Then Mr. Godsell, the manager of the Revillon post, thinks he can get me an Indian boy to go down as far as Dunvegan, and ultimately Yi-hea, the boy who had accompanied the mail-carrier up to Hudson's Hope, is engaged to start off the next morning. He has a caricature of a face, and an absolutely unlimited appetite. The extent of his English vocabulary is limited to the two expressions "good" and "all right," and my knowledge of the Beaver language is confined to the word *miahsin*, which means the same thing, so that all our arrangements have to be made through the help of Mr. Godsell, who speaks both Beaver and Cree fluently. Yi-hea agrees to a salary of a dollar and a half a day, and says that he has all the necessary cooking and table utensils for the journey, but he cannot be persuaded to agree to start before eight o'clock in the morning. He owes nine dollars to Revillon's, so, with his consent, I pay three dollars on account toward that.

How is he going to get back from Dunvegan? It is 120 miles down-stream, and he could not bring up a canoe alone if he had one. He cannot come back by steamer, as he will have no money in the world except the dollar and a half balance that he will get from me after the three days' trip, so he will have to foot it, unless there happens to be a party coming up that he can join. I begin to calculate that I will have to pay him a week's wages for the return trip, besides finding his food! But no, the

Dunvegan Indians are a superior lot to those here, and he prefers to stay down there for a while!

So I am in luck as far as expense goes, but what he gets is as much as he is worth.

Meanwhile, I have bought a canoe for fifteen dollars—a cranky one, but the best available. Yi-hea doesn't think much of it, and wants me to buy his father's, which is *miahsin,* but he is too late, the other is already bought and paid for.

The one settler, Mr. Wood, is very hospitable; he has done a lot of work clearing his land, and is expecting his partner in when the steamer comes. Meanwhile, he is raising a quantity of oats and all kinds of vegetables on the ground attached to the police-station. He insists on my taking a sack of new potatoes with me, which materially helps my fare on the way down.

* * * * *

Eight o'clock in the morning arrives, but no Yi-hea. His father returned from a hunting trip last night, having killed a bear, and Yi-hea, having gorged himself, is now sound asleep, and, when roused, wants to get out of his engagement, the juicy bear being more attractive than even the large sum of money in view. The way they eat the flesh is simply to cut it in chunks and hold each piece to the fire until it is roasted on the outside, the inside remaining almost raw.

Mr. Godsell is up to their ways, and informs him that I am a policeman, and that by putting his mark to the receipt for the three dollars, he has engaged himself to go, and will be liable to be locked up if he gives any trouble, by all of which he is duly

impressed, and with many sighs turns his back on the paternal teepee and the succulent bear.

All this I only learn afterwards, the conversation being quite unintelligible to me, but I must remember to act up to my character as a policeman.

At last everything is loaded into the canoe, and we get off about ten o'clock.

Yi-hea doesn't see any sense in paddling downstream; the current will carry us down, so why exert oneself uselessly? The idea that time can have any value whatever has never entered his head. Time and again I make him start paddling, but after fifteen or twenty strokes he relapses into inactivity, finding that his whole energy is required to steer the canoe. So, as I want to reach the Crossing on the fourth day, I do nearly all the paddling myself. Yi-hea expends a vast amount of energy, however, in the rendering of songs, which are no doubt very beautiful when you understand the Beaver language, but there seems to be a great deal of repetition in them, and at times it develops into a mere lung exercise, enough to frighten away any living creature within half a mile!

Now and then he points out a lynx or some other animal on the shore, or draws my attention to some natural feature, explaining all about it in a voluble flow of language, which is unfortunately lost on me; but I reply in English, and we have quite a lively conversation, neither of us having the remotest idea what the other is talking about!

Midday arrives, and I choose a nice-looking spot where we stop for lunch. Then it transpires that Yi-hea's sole luggage, besides his blankets, consists

of a cup, saucer, and spoon, no knife or fork, no plate, no frying-pan!

So I have perforce to share mine with him; I give him my plate and eat out of the frying-pan myself, not wishing to cook my food in it after he has eaten off it! He gets my knife and fork, and I keep the spoon, as I take no meat. Before starting I had boiled a kettleful of rice, so now I have first to boil the potatoes in the other kettle and then make the tea in it; being short of utensils, some scheming is necessary. Then I fry some beans and bacon for Yi-hea, turn them out on the plate, and, after cleaning out the frying-pan, do some more beans for myself in butter. I don't trust Yi-hea to do any of the cooking!

Yi-hea would like a nap after lunch, but I want to get on, so we pack up and proceed, and the afternoon passes in the same way as the morning. In places there are large islands, and the river divides into three or four channels, but the water is so low that in many of these it is not deep enough for a canoe all the way, bars extending right across them. It is here that Yi-hea's knowledge of the river comes in useful; he raises himself on his knees and gazes intently ahead, finally pronouncing on the right course to be followed. Sometimes a channel narrows down suddenly and the converging water forms big waves, threatening to swamp the canoe. As long as one keeps on the comb of the water it is all right, but where there is a sharp turn that is not always easy. When she runs down swiftly in turbulent waters Yi-hea leans back and laughs; there is indeed a wonderful fascination about the move-

ment, sitting in a crazy little shell and being carried along at an alarming rate by the rushing current!

But over the greater part of the distance the water is dead, and in order to make any progress it is necessary to paddle steadily. In this I get little help from Yi-hea, so I keep on paddling until dusk has fallen, refusing to be persuaded by him to camp at this or that spot, which is *miahsin*. At last it is getting too nearly dark to continue, and I look out for a suitable place, but there is none in sight; both banks are steep and densely timbered. So we have to go on for another couple of miles, when we come to a passable place, and lay out our blankets. Yi-hea soon has a fire made, upon which I cook the supper. By that time it is quite dark, and we soon turn in. I don't know whether we are in British Columbia or Alberta now; we must be somewhere near the boundary.

* * * * *

At 5.30 a.m. I wake and shout to Yi-hea to get up, but he is tightly rolled up in his blanket and does not stir. Then I throw pebbles at him. After a few minutes he rolls over and grins, then closes his eyes again. I throw more pebbles, and finally, get up and pull his blanket off him, upon which he has no choice but to get up. That is not a very elaborate process, as he has taken off nothing but his boots, and washing is a superfluous luxury, so the fire is soon made, and we have breakfast and get off by half-past seven.

The next day passes in the same way. The river is in a deep valley, the ground on either side rising to a height of seven hundred to a thousand feet above us, sometimes fifteen hundred feet; the

bottom of the valley is narrow, timbered with cottonwood and poplar; on the higher levels are birch and spruce.

As the river sweeps round on its southward bend some fine scenery is passed through. The river itself varies between a quarter and three-quarters of a mile in width.

It is late again when we camp, and the best place to be found is on a mud flat which is covered when the water is high. The mud is full of boulders, but the surface is smooth, although hard. It is quite dry, as it is long since the water was up over it. The underbrush is far too dense to allow of a space being cleared on the bank above, and it is getting dark, so we make the best of it.

The hard ground is not so bad after all, and we are soon asleep.

But about 2.30 a.m. I wake up to find it raining hard, and there is no shelter, so I tuck myself under the blanket and try to get to sleep again. The rain keeps on, and presently I feel a little trickle down inside the blanket. Soon there is quite a pool inside. After an hour or so the rain slackens off, and I fall asleep again, only to wake up to find the blanket wet all over, and the downpour harder than ever.

At last it gets light and I look round to see how Yi-hea has fared. Presently he rolls over and grins, but a very mournful grin; he has had a wetting too. About half-past six the rain ceases, and we get up. Yi-hea doesn't need any urging to get up this time; it is too uncomfortable in the wet blanket.

HUDSON'S BAY CO. FACTOR'S HOUSE AT FORT ST. JOHN.

(The tobacco plants are seen below the end windows.)

TELEGRAPH OFFICE, GROUARD.

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During the morning it clears up, and we have another fine day.

Now we come to a great bar which extends all across the river, except for a channel in which there is quite a fall, and the water is far too rough for a canoe, so we go down inside the bar for about three-quarters of a mile. Then we come aground, and have to get out and wade, dragging the canoe across the bar, a distance of some fifty yards, in which the water is only from one to three inches deep. We use the paddles as skids to help out, and one gets broken in the process, so now there can be no more paddling. Yi-hea needs the remaining paddle to steer, and, although he splices the broken one, it doesn't last, so I have to exercise patience.

About 12.30, as we round a bend, a settlement appears in the distance, and Yi-hea triumphantly shouts, "Dunvegan!" for such it is, and by one o'clock we have arrived.

The first thing is to go to the Hudson's Bay post and ask the news. There I learn that the newly constructed railway between Edmonton and Athabaska Landing is out of commission, and the steamer will probably not come up the river again until that is put right. Then I pay Yi-hea his dollar and a half, and ascertain through the Hudson's Bay factor that he is satisfied. It is all the money he has in the world, and he is 120 miles from home, but he goes right across to the store and buys a pair of kid gloves with it! There are lots of working gloves there, which would have been really useful, but he wants something dressy, so all his money goes on these gloves, which

are absolutely useless to him, as soon as it is received!

The last I see of him he is walking off with a friend towards a teepee, wearing his kid gloves and looking very pleased with himself.

* * * * *

About five hundred settlers have come to Dunvegan this summer, but they are all on the high ground, and no trace of their presence is to be seen from the valley. There is a wire-rope ferry across the river here, with a high tower on each side, giving an appearance of importance to the place.

I have been counting on getting an Indian here to pilot me down to the Crossing, which is sixty miles farther down, but there is not one to be had, and if I could get one it would be a useless expense, as I would have to pay for his return trip, and the river is perfectly easy from here down, so that even a novice like myself could take a canoe down without any trouble.

So at four o'clock I set out on the last lap of the Peace River canoe trip by myself, and in good time in the evening I select a suitable place to camp. My blanket is still soaked, and all I can do towards drying it is to spread it out in the sun for an hour or so at the midday halt each day.

It is a grand experience travelling alone down this mighty river, an insignificant speck on the face of the eternally moving waters, the ground rising in solemn grandeur to a height of eight hundred feet on either side. Not a sound is heard, save

the eternal swirl of the water rushing down on its perpetual journey to the great ocean away to the north, and even this sound is not heard ; the ear is attuned to it and one is not aware of any sound at all, except when the presence of a bar causes the sound to swell to such an extent as to arrest the attention. At other times the incessant, monotonous plash of the water only serves to render the silence all the more intense, the eternal silence of the wilds, the primeval world. There are animals in this country, but without the experienced eye of a Yi-hea, one sees none ; one appears to be the only living creature in this vast country—in the Universe, so it seems.

Strange thoughts come to one, thoughts which are rather feelings than thoughts, which one cannot formulate into words, thoughts which haunt one, to which one yearns to give expression, but cannot. Watching the silent hills, watching the water ceaselessly rushing past, as it has done for millions of years, and will do for millions more, one is brought face to face with Eternity. It is strange to think that the same sun which is shining so brightly on the sparkling waters is also shining at this very moment on Vancouver with its rush and bustle of petty human interests. Surely this is a different world from that! All that seems so far away, so unreal ; here we are in Eternity, in Reality. How utterly paltry and insignificant dollars and real estate seem in comparison with This !

The broad sheet of water moves on its endless course. One cannot help wondering where such inexhaustible supplies of water come from, and the

beautiful lines of Sir Edwin Arnold come into one's mind :—

> Stars sweep and question not. This is enough,
> That life and death and joy and woe abide ;
> And cause and sequence, and the course of time,
> And being's ceaseless tide,
>
> Which, ever changing, runs, linked like a river
> By ripples following ripples, fast or slow—
> The same yet not the same—from far-off fountain
> To where its waters flow
>
> Into the seas. These steaming to the Sun
> Give the lost wavelets back in cloudy fleece
> To trickle down the hills, and glide again,
> Having no pause or peace.

The simile forces itself upon one ; the eternal movement of the river, ever renewed—the same yet not the same—is a fitting symbol of the eternal flow of life, and as the one is an integral part of a Whole, stupendous beyond all imagining, but working all according to a definite plan, with every detail worked out, how could any one question that the other is also—that what appears to us to be such a hopeless tangle of conflicting interests is, when seen as a whole, really a regular and orderly scheme?

Such thoughts, and many more, pass through one's mind, but any attempt to reduce them to words is a failure, and can give no sort of an idea of the effect upon the mind of these surroundings.

* * * * *

By three o'clock on the second day I see a house on the left bank, and fields of ripe wheat. From

here on there are settlements nearly all the way to the Crossing, the valley spreading out to a considerable width on the left side. It feels quite like civilization once more, and the waving fields of golden grain look very beautiful in the bright sun.

At one point I see a church and a lumber-mill, and I land to see what place it is, but there is not a soul in sight. A priest comes out of the church in the distance, but disappears into a neighbouring house. It is a Jesuit settlement.

I have been slacking, thinking that I was nearly at the Crossing, but the afternoon is wearing on, and it is not in sight yet, so I put more energy into it, and paddle hard for five or six miles more. Then, at last, a break appears in the high ground to the right, and presently I come to the mouth of the Smoky River, one of the largest tributaries of the Peace, and I know that the Crossing is not far off now. And, coming round a bend, as dusk is rapidly falling, I see a great tower ahead on each side of the river, which I know to be the towers of a wire-rope ferry, and moored against the right bank are two white steamers.

Striking out across the river towards them, by the time I reach the right bank I have been carried down a mile and am close to the steamers. Then I ground my canoe below the ferry, pull her nose up on to the shore, unload all my dunnage, and then pull her up on to the beach and make her fast. My long canoe trip is over.

* * * * *

Peace River Crossing is quite a lively little settlement; it is the gateway of the Peace River. There is a "hotel" there, but not quite the kind of

institution usually known by that name. It is practically a bunk-house with a primitive restaurant attached; there are no bedrooms, only two bunk-rooms where you have the privilege of sleeping in your own blankets, among an assorted company.

After sleeping in the fresh air for two months that does not seem particularly attractive, so I find a clean spot close by and lay out my blanket, make a fire, and cook my supper. During the night it freezes, but my Hudson's Bay blanket is warm, although still wet.

The weekly stage for Grouard on Lesser Slave Lake is going out in the morning, but all six seats are booked! There is, however, another rig, a "democrat" as they are called here, leaving at the same time, and I am fortunately able to secure a seat in it.

It is only eighty-six miles to Grouard, but the journey takes two days and a half, as the same teams travel all the way. The road is very poor, especially for the last forty miles, where the soil is black and soft. Each afternoon we stop early at a road-house, where we put up for the night, and as it freezes a little each night I am tempted to sleep inside. The first afternoon I take advantage of the fire in the bunk-room to dry out my blanket; three nights in a wet blanket is enough, but sleeping in the open as I have been, I don't even catch a cold. We each take our own food, and cook it on the stove in the road-house.

On leaving the Crossing the road climbs up the steep side of the valley for a thousand feet, on to the general level of the country. It is a pleasant country to live in, slightly rolling, and lightly

timbered with birch and poplar. There are some shady wooded areas of black pine, and many open meadows which look very inviting.

There are a number of settlers along the road, but we are in Alberta now, and settlers turn up their noses at "timbered land," on which a few birches and poplars vary the monotony of the outlook; they want land which doesn't need any clearing. This sounds strange after British Columbia, where "timbered land" means virgin forest, with fir, cedar, hemlock, pine, and other trees three and four feet in diameter. That sort of land really does take some clearing, but this! Fancy calling this timbered land!

* * * * *

Grouard is seen a long time before it is reached; we have to skirt all round the north side of Buffalo Lake, some five or six miles. There is a settlement also on the north side, where the Episcopal Mission is situated, but the main townsite is near the outlet of Buffalo Lake into Lesser Slave Lake, where the Catholic Mission and the Hudson's Bay Post are. The dry, black soil is terrible to travel over, and the long thoroughfare through the settlement, which can hardly yet be dignified by the name of "street," is six inches deep in black dust.

There are sidewalks for a little way, and a number of frame buildings, including two hotels, with real bedrooms this time, and a bank. Alongside these flimsy modern buildings are some very solid ancient-looking log cabins and houses, one of the smaller cabins serving the purpose of Government telegraph-office, while another alongside has been converted into the Peace River Hotel.

It is set back a little way from the street, and a notice-board has been set out in front to draw the attention of all passers-by to the fact that meals can be had for the sum of thirty-five cents.

Fortunately, there is a steamer leaving Grouard for the outside world in the morning. One afternoon in Grouard is quite enough; the black loam is a very rich soil, but it is not pleasant to walk upon.

Lesser Slave Lake is only from seven to ten miles wide, and very shallow, the navigable channel being only some half-mile in width. The shores are low and uninteresting. A few miles from Grouard the steamer stops an hour to take on a supply of cordwood, after which the journey is monotonous until Sawridge, at the eastern end of the lake, is reached in the evening. Here she ties up for the night.

The sleeping accommodation on board is poor, the cabins resembling loose-boxes rather than passenger cabins, no bedding of any kind being provided, only two bare shelves to sleep upon, each passenger using his own blanket.

Next morning we travel down Lesser Slave River. It is narrow and crooked; frequently at a sharp bend the bow of the steamer is bumped into the side and prized round with poles. It is the only way in which these very sharp turns can be negotiated at all.

Norris Landing is reached at midday. From here for sixteen miles there are rapids, and a portage has to be made. There is a good wagon-road, and a number of wagons transfer the passengers and baggage across to Mirror Landing, which is

TAKING ON CORDWOOD, LESSER SLAVE RIVER.

INDIAN TEEPEE, NORRIS LANDING.

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within a mile of the confluence of the Lesser Slave River with the Athabaska. The portage takes all the afternoon ; it pours with rain most of the way across, and we are sitting in the wagons on top of our bundles of blankets and dunnage, and try to make the best of it.

At Mirror Landing we find the *Northland Echo,* one of a fleet of steamers running on the Athabaska River. They are stern-wheelers, like all river steamers in this country, standing very high out of the water, the space between the decks being open—strange-looking craft. Being on the last wagon, I find that there are no berths left when I arrive, but ultimately am told that it will be all right, and am shown into a spacious cabin with only one bed. It is the wireless operator's cabin, and part of the apparatus is already installed, but there is no operator yet. They are up to date here all right !

The Athabaska is a fine river, something like the Peace, but the banks are rather more wooded here. At one o'clock on the following day Athabaska Landing is reached, and it is about time they made a decent landing. The mud on the river bank after the recent rain is something fearful to get over, especially when one has to negotiate a sloping bank with a heavy bundle on one's back. For there are no porters here to carry one's dunnage !

This is quite a town, moving picture shows and all, and has a very busy appearance ; there are actually three streets built. Here I find the suit-case I had sent round from Fort George, and am able to put on the garb of civilization once more.

* * * * *

The railway has been out of commission for three weeks, owing to the track sinking in the muskeg, tying up all freight traffic going in to the Peace and Athabaska Rivers, and accounting for the delay of the steamer that should have gone up the Peace a fortnight ago. But luck is with me here as it was at Grouard; for the line has been put into working order, and has to-day been taken over by the Canadian Northern Railway Company from the contractors, and the first passenger train is even now on its way out.

At 8 p.m. it arrives, amid great rejoicings; the whole population turns out to welcome it as it comes slowly down the slope and pulls up between the main street and the river front, where the station will be built later on.

Next day it takes us back to Edmonton, a nine hours' journey, although the distance is only 110 miles. But the train has to go slowly until the track has finally settled. All along we see overturned freight cars, wheels and axles strewn along on both sides. At one place one of the freight cars on our train goes off the track, and we are delayed for an hour while it is being put on again. The muskeg is a hard problem for the railway engineer, but the track will be gradually improved, and in course of time express trains will be able to travel here as they do elsewhere.

There is no dining car, and we stop an hour at Clyde for lunch; then on again, and in the afternoon Edmonton is reached, and we are in civilization once more.

* * * * *

CHAPTER VII

THE TERMINAL CITY

Having heard so much about other parts of the province, you will no doubt have a certain amount of curiosity to hear something about the metropolis of the country, the coming Liverpool of Canada.

In writing about the Island, I drew attention to the misapprehension prevalent in the Old Country, by which Vancouver City and Vancouver Island are mixed up; people talk as though the great Island were a little islet, just off the mainland, covered by a small town called Vancouver! As you already know better, I need no longer insist upon the fact that Vancouver City is on the mainland, on the solid North American continent.

Thirty years ago nobody had ever heard of the town of Vancouver, B.C., for the simple reason that there was no such town. There was, and is, a city of the same name in the neighbouring State of Washington, but the Terminal City has utterly eclipsed its namesake, which has remained wrapped in oblivion as far as the outer world is concerned, while this metropolis of mushroom growth has risen to fame. Although it may fitly be described as a city of mushroom growth, the

simile ends there; Vancouver is not a city of a day, it has come to stay.

In the old days the Royal City, New Westminster, was the only town on the British Columbian coast, and when a trans-continental railway was mooted, it was looked upon as the natural terminus, unless, indeed, one of the more northerly routes surveyed should be chosen.

But the C.P.R. knew a thing or two, even in those prehistoric days, and, instead of humbly coming to the Royal City and asking if they might enter its sacred precincts, they made straight for the head of Burrard Inlet, and boomed the town-site of Port Moody for all they were worth. Then, when the line was nearly through, it was discovered that Port Moody was not a suitable terminal, and the line was extended to the little hamlet of Granville, near the Hastings sawmill.

The name Granville remains as the designation of one of the city's finest thoroughfares, but the great Terminal City created by the C.P.R. has been rechristened after that intrepid navigator and explorer, Van Couver.

* * * * *

Pages and pages might be written—indeed, have been written time and time again—about the wonderful growth of Vancouver, its trade, its shipping, its wealth, its future; countless rows of figures are set forth, showing that no other city in the past, present, or future ever has, can, or will even distantly approach its glory; but as for all these things, are they not written in the books of the Real Estate Merchants of Vancouver? Booklets are issued by the Provincial Government with

the object of attracting and guiding settlers, which describe, among other things, the growth and prosperity of the Terminal City, but the most gorgeous are the richly illustrated productions of the Real Estate Merchants, which set forth in glowing terms, calculated to convince the most sceptical, the glories of Vancouver, and the special virtues of the particular subdivision advertised.

So I am not going to burden you with any statistics describing the city in cold figures, but will try and give you some sort of an impression of what kind of a place it is to live in.

* * * * *

Vancouver should be approached from the sea; the approach by train is not impressive, but the unfolding view as one enters the harbour is a never-failing source of delight. Point Atkinson on the left, Point Grey on the right, we steam up into the wide mouth of Burrard Inlet. Far away on our right we see the clearings, and can distinguish the houses dotted about on the great peninsula of Point Grey. On our left we pass the rapidly growing suburb of West Vancouver.

Straight ahead is the peninsula of Stanley Park, right in the middle of the Inlet, its dark forest trees standing out clear and distinct. To the right of it is the broad expanse of English Bay, the mouth of False Creek, which one would naturally take to be the entrance to make for. We can just distinguish the pier and beach at English Bay, and on the far side of False Creek we see Kitsilano beach with its pavilion.

But we avoid this broad and attractive expanse of water, and instead make for the narrow entrance

to the left of Stanley Park. Now we are close up, and see the wonderful Siwash Rock standing up twenty feet high on the shore below the cliff, a round pillar of rock, surmounted by a small fir-tree, gnarled and twisted.

Sweeping on, we come to Prospect Point, and enter the Narrows, through which the water rushes furiously. On our left is the flat land of the north shore, sloping gradually up to the foot of the mountains. Opposite us is the Indian Mission Settlement at the mouth of Capilano Creek, and, if the tide is low, we can see, extending towards us across the mud, the great pipe which brings Vancouver's water supply, that delicious, sparkling nectar that comes straight from the mountains a few miles away.

If the tide is falling we go slowly; the whole bulk of the water from the North Arm is rushing through this bottle-neck. But if the tide is on the rise we rush through in great style. On our left North Vancouver opens up before our view, stretching away up the slope towards the ever present mountains. Standing out prominently, along the water front, its two yellow wooden spires gleaming in the sun, is the Roman Catholic church of the Indian reservation.

But our attention is called to the south side now. Sweeping past Brockton Point, we emerge from the Narrows into the placid waters of Burrard Inlet, two miles and a half wide, and on our right we now first behold the city of Vancouver. And what a different city it is from what it was a few years ago! On the highest point, dominating everything, rises the white mass of the Vancouver Block with

BURRARD INLET, FROM STANLEY PARK.

THE NARROWS.

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its great clock tower, visible for miles. Down below is the great tower of the World Building, which claims to be the highest building in the British Empire, but loses much in impressiveness on account of its poor situation.

All over the place are skyscrapers, fortunately limited to a height of 120 feet by a wise by-law that was passed after the permits had been granted for the two blocks mentioned to be built to a greater height; and in the West End, enormous apartment blocks. The whole aspect of the city has altogether changed within the last few years. Along the water-front, wharves, warehouses, signs of thriving commerce everywhere.

But we haven't got long to contemplate the prospect, for in a few minutes we are alongside the C.P.R. wharf, and disembarking.

* * * * *

On arriving, either by train or steamer, you are accosted before landing by transfer agents, who take your baggage checks, and the address to which you want the baggage sent, relieving you of any further responsibility, so that you can walk or take a car home in peace. There are a few cabs in the city, but nobody ever seems to use them. There are taxis also, but very few come to meet the trains or boats. There is always a long row of hotel buses, and all the hotels are nearly always full.

The Hotel Vancouver is the most swagger one, but it is nothing like the "Empress" at Victoria, although also a C.P.R. institution. The original building has been added to so much that it has been entirely absorbed by the new wings, which form a large and very imposing block.

Close by is the new Court House, quite an artistic building, almost the only really elegant public building in the city.

There are two fine streets, Granville and Hastings, (the word "street" is usually omitted when referring to a street by name out here), and several others which will be very fine business thoroughfares later on. In laying out the city, it was evidently intended to make the business centre at the crossing of Hastings and Main (formerly Westminster Avenue), where the City Hall is situated. But business has gathered round the C.P.R. Depot and the Post Office, three-quarters of a mile farther west. and this is the focus of activity, and is likely to remain so for many years to come, in spite of the superior location of the other centre.

When decorated with flags, etc., on occasions of rejoicing, the streets present a very gay appearance. On the occasion of the visit of H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught in 1912, a number of triumphal arches were erected by various public bodies and foreign colonies in the city, some of which were really very beautiful.

At night the store windows are very bright; in fact, the greater portion of the street illumination is supplied by these and the street signs. Most of the latter are either intermittent or continually changing in shape and colour, having a somewhat trying effect on the eyes, but being very effective as advertisements and adding a certain amount of liveliness to the scene.

In the residential sections the lighting is poor, an arc lamp generally being placed at each street intersection and the intervening distances of 150

to 200 yards being left in darkness. On a moonless night it is sometimes exceedingly dark, especially where there are shade trees, as along Georgia, the finest street in the West End. It is usual when returning home late from theatres or dances to carry as little as possible on one in the way of loose cash or valuables, as "hold-ups" are not infrequent, more particularly for a short period each winter, when a number of "thugs" from across the line, having made Seattle too hot for them, come over and practise their calling in Vancouver. A solitary pedestrian in a residential district late at night is always liable to meet one of these gentry, and find himself gazing into the barrel of a revolver, when there is no alternative but to put his hands up and submit to his pockets being searched.

And it is not only at night that they practise; there are sometimes epidemics of purse-snatching in the West End; ladies are relieved of their vanity bags and purses in the middle of the afternoon in the most fashionable parts of the town! This generally, but not always, occurs during foggy weather, the thick fog affording cover for the malefactors, who make good their escape before there is any chance of raising an alarm. That inexorable decree of fashion which says that ladies are not to wear pockets, but must carry everything in their hands, is very helpful to the purse-snatcher.

Sometimes the "thugs" go in for more daring exploits; street cars have been held up, one man wielding the revolver while another relieves the passengers of their valuables. On one occasion

a restaurant in the heart of the city was the scene of a daring hold-up in the middle of the day. The lady cashier found herself confronted by the business end of a revolver, and the till was emptied before any one realized what was going on. By the time the alarm was raised, the daring robber had disappeared in the foggy street!

Banks have occasionally been robbed in a very bold manner; but that is, of course, an exploit which has to be planned in great detail beforehand, and needs a number of accomplices, and the risks incurred are so enormous that it is not attempted very frequently.

But I must not go on describing such things, or you will think that Vancouver is a dangerous place to live in. The possibility of being held up lends a certain spice of excitement to life, and makes one realize that one actually is in the wild and woolly West; but the real hold-up season is very short, the police soon get on their tracks, and the "thugs" are either caught or find it convenient to disappear back across the border. The whole thing is treated rather as a joke by the ordinary individual.

* * * * *

Another thing which brings home to one the fact that one is not in the Old Country is the frequency of fires in the city. Scarcely a day passes without the peculiar long-drawn-out whistle and the clang of the bell being heard somewhere in the town, announcing the approach of a fire-engine. Upon these sounds being heard the streets are rapidly cleared, for the motors which carry the fire-engines, hose, ladders, fire-escapes, chemical engines, etc.,

travel at a great speed. There are a number of fire-engines stationed at various points all over the city, and the way in which they are handled is marvellous; the Vancouver Fire Brigade is considered one of the very finest in the world. The frequency of fires is, of course, due to the fact that, outside of the business section and the large apartment blocks in the West End, practically every house is built of wood.

There are some very fine streets in the residential districts, and in places boulevards have been laid out, which will in the course of time be magnificent. But what strikes one forcibly is the fact that there is not a single open square in the city. It seems extraordinary that in such a great and thriving city there should be no breathing space where one can go for a few minutes. Of course there is always Stanley Park, but that is so far out, it is no use going there unless you have an hour or two to spare.

* * * * *

But what a place Stanley Park is when you do get there! No wonder it is famed throughout the West. A peninsula, literally almost an island, with seven miles of shore line, covered with primeval forest, mostly just as it has been for a million years, joined by a narrow strip of land to a great city! A splendid auto-road runs all round it, now following the shore, again ascending through the heart of the forest among magnificent cedars, firs, hemlocks, pines, and a luxuriant undergrowth; then we come to Prospect Point, and, leaving the auto, walk up to the edge of the cliff, securely railed in, and gaze out across the Narrows at the

glorious panorama of forest and mountain on the north side of Burrard Inlet. Or, turning to the left, if it is a clear day, we can see the mountains of Vancouver Island, fifty miles away.

If it is rough we stand for a time in silence, fascinated by the sight of the waves dashing against the rocks below us. It is a great sight to watch the tide racing through the Narrows, to see one of the elegant C.P.R. *Princesses* flying past on the tide, or to watch the frantic efforts of some small craft trying to buck the current.

But if you want to enjoy Stanley Park, you must go on foot and explore some of the countless trails which intersect it in all directions. We may wander over new ground day after day for months, discovering unexpected beauties each day. Now we pass along a corduroy trail over a piece of swampy ground, immense moss-covered logs lying all around, ferns growing in luxuriance. Frequently we see great trees, two or three feet in diameter, growing apparently out of a large fallen log, but a closer inspection reveals the roots twined round it. Then we come out suddenly on the little lake, reeds growing all round the edges, and sit for a while in the shade on one of the rustic benches, watching the sparkle of the sun on the water.

Or again we come out on to the auto-road, and see the great dead stub, the famous "Big Tree," but resist the enticements of the photographer stationed there to have our photos taken standing in the aperture in the base of the tree.

Or we may picnic in the forest above the Siwash Rock, and scramble down the cliff to the narrow

SIWASH ROCK.

THE "BIG TREE," STANLEY PARK.

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shelf of shore at the base of that remarkable pillar. But we cannot climb it.

If we leave the trails we may easily get lost; the growth is so thick in places that the sun cannot penetrate into the forest gloom; there is a legend about a certain white stone—but you must read that in Pauline Johnson's delightful little book of legends of Vancouver.

In the summer we can go to Second Beach and have a swim. But it is not much of a beach; there are still a lot of rocks about, although many have been removed. That is one thing that one misses here; there is no good beach. Those at English Bay and Kitsilano are better, but they are poor in comparison with what one is used to in the Old Country. To get anything of that sort one must go out to the open coast.

On Sundays we come out to listen to the band. In the intervals we take a walk round among the animals and birds; there is quite a good beginning of a zoological garden near the main entrance of the park; the bears are particular favourites. On a fine Sunday afternoon the people flock out there in thousands, and a motley crowd it is too: all the smart set rubbing shoulders with the most appalling creatures with shock heads and smooth, shaved necks, continually chewing gum; then we see Swedes, Italians, Hindoos, Japs, Chinese—all pass in review as we lazily recline on the grass and watch them go by.

One of the most beautiful sights in this delightful spot is that of sunset viewed across the bay at Second Beach. The outline of the rocks, the trees above, the peaceful sea, the land stretching away to Point

Atkinson on the right, and Point Grey still dimly seen on the left, a dark grey sky above, shot with streaks of crimson, the glorious colours of the setting sun over the sea, seen between the trees—words fail one in the attempt to describe such a scene; it must be seen to be appreciated.

And then the park by moonlight on a summer's night! But perhaps the most fascinating of all is the appearance of the park in winter, when the trees are decked in white, sparkling in the sun. There is not much snow in Vancouver, it seldom remains long on the ground, but when there *is* a fall you should see the people flocking out to Stanley Park with their kodaks! And no wonder, for the familiar scenes have taken on an entirely new aspect, one of fairy-like beauty, and the crisp, dry air has such an exhilarating effect after the usual muggy wet of a Vancouver winter.

* * * * *

Some people at home seem to think that winter in Vancouver is like that in Winnipeg, and it comes quite as a shock to learn that it is really much more like that in the West of England, very wet, but not cold. There is usually one cold snap for a couple of weeks, but the thermometer very rarely approaches anywhere towards zero. On the whole the climate of Vancouver is not at all unlike that of Cardiff, except that it is certainly very much finer in summer.

But in summer one always wants to leave the city; confinement in an office or a house in such glorious weather is more than irksome; one longs to be away "up-country." It is very nice to come back to Vancouver after a trip into the interior or

up the coast, but I always feel sorry for those whose occupations condemn them to remain in the city all through the summer.

Both offices and private houses are, however, very different from those in a large city in the Old Country. There are still a considerable number of old-fashioned office blocks, but the vast majority are now reinforced concrete skyscrapers, with numerous lifts, large windows, water laid on everywhere, every room bright and comfortable. And the office furniture is all of the most modern type, everything up to date.

And the houses; the difference here is still more striking. There are no monotonous rows of houses, with a few square feet of garden in front and a little more behind. Every house stands by itself, in its own ground, with garden all round, and this garden is not fenced off from the road. There is nothing to prevent you from walking across the lawn and picking the flowers, of which there are such brilliant displays in front of most houses, those of the poor as well as those of the rich.

As I mentioned before, the houses are all built of wood; some have stone basements, but the private houses built of stone in Vancouver could, I believe, be counted on the fingers of one hand. In the better districts there are scarcely any two houses alike; some of them are exceedingly pleasing in appearance, the sides, as well as the roof, being covered with shingles, stained brown or dark green. It seems almost a pity to build such beautiful structures in such an impermanent material as wood.

The West End, extending down to English Bay and Stanley Park, used to be the most classy resi-

dential section, but a great many of the private houses have been removed and great apartment blocks built in their place, some very attractive-looking, others hideous.

Sometimes a house is moved bodily. It is rather startling at first, on going round a corner, to see a house where we expected to see the open street! They are moved by means of a horse-windlass, with the aid of skids and rollers. Then one occasionally sees the upper portion of a house cribbed up, while the lower portion is removed, and stores built in its place.

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The most fashionable district now is Shaughnessey Heights, away up on the high ground behind Fairview. Nearly all the millionaires live there, and there are some beautiful houses, as well as some which display more lavishness than taste. The houses are larger here than elsewhere, but only a few are larger than an ordinary English suburban residence, most of the houses in this country being considerably smaller.

From Shaughnessey Heights a magnificent view over the city is obtained. One looks down across Fairview and False Creek, spanned by three fine girder bridges, over the peninsula on which the city stands, with its forest of skyscrapers, Stanley Park on the left, across Burrard Inlet to North Vancouver and the mountains beyond, among which one cannot help noticing the twin snow-capped peaks of "The Lions" keeping guard over the city.

These mountains on the north side are one of the glories of the place; only a few miles away, there are few parts of Vancouver from which they cannot

be seen. On a winter's afternoon to see the grey peaks, the snow crimson in the light of the sinking sun, and the rich dark green of the forest below is a sight not easily to be forgotten. Surely it is worth while pausing and forgetting about real estate values for a few moments in the presence of such splendours!

Vancouver is a city magnificently situated, among some of the most glorious scenery imaginable, and yet the possibilities of its situation have to a great extent been lost, and everything has been made subservient to the worship of the almighty dollar! But I must not be unjust; Stanley Park has been reserved for the public for ever, it can never be used for building purposes. And now, before it is altogether too late, steps are being taken to beautify the city as much as possible.

Another very fashionable suburb is Point Grey. The whole of the land extending out to the point, seven miles away, has been subdivided, and building is going on apace. A large area has been reserved for the University of British Columbia, which promises to be a very fine institution, and has certainly a superb location overlooking the Straits of Georgia.[1]

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The less fashionable districts are also very pleasant, every house being detached, in its own garden, although in some places, even in the better class sections, in order to make the houses as large as possible, they are built up to within a foot or two of the edge of the lot on either side, leaving very narrow spaces between the houses.

[1] This has been opened since the above was written.

But generally they are bright and cheerful, although small. This applies to all the houses occupied by the working classes too; in fact, a working man generally owns the house in which he lives, and the lot on which it stands, having invested his savings in this way, instead of continuing to have to pay a high rent.

The East End of the city is not very attractive, it is true, until you get some distance out. But what a paradise in comparison with the dingy monotony of the endless rows of brick houses occupied by the same class in Old Country towns! Slums are unknown in Vancouver, and the city is determined that they shall always remain unknown. Let us hope that they will succeed!

If we take a street car up to Mount Pleasant, and from there take one of the suburban cars with strange devices that carry us off mile after mile through the unknown regions of South Vancouver, we begin to get an idea of the area covered by the city, or rather by the municipalities adjacent to it. Some of the car-lines take us down nearly to the Fraser, five miles away; others go off more to the east.

Or we can go out due east in a "Cannon Ball" car, past Hastings Park to North Burnaby. Where a short while ago one saw nothing but virgin forest, one finds populous suburbs now.

We have the choice of three car-lines to New Westminster, and there is an excellent service. By the original direct route past Central Park the distance is twelve miles; a slightly longer route passes beautiful Burnaby Lake, which is fast becoming a delightful suburban district, and the third line

WORLD BUILDING.

IN THE INDIAN RESERVATION, NORTH VANCOUVER.

MOVING A HOUSE IN THE WEST END.

To face p. 354.

goes across to the Fraser at Eburne, and thence follows up the river.

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The city of New Westminster is not very interesting; it consists chiefly of one fine broad avenue, a small cathedral, a prison, and a lunatic asylum, standing in beautiful grounds. There is a fine steel bridge over the Fraser, which carries both the Great Northern Railway and the road. The Royal City is a pleasant place to live in, however; it has some very nice residential districts overlooking the river.

The whole peninsula between the Fraser and Burrard Inlet, extending from New Westminster to Point Grey, will soon be one continuous town. It is all subdivided already; the proud old Royal City, while still retaining its independence, is fast becoming absorbed in Greater Vancouver.

A couple of miles farther up the Fraser, on the south side, is Port Mann, the advertised terminus and town site of the Canadian Northern Pacific Railway. It was much boomed a few years ago as the terminus of that transcontinental line, but of course they couldn't afford to ignore Vancouver, and, although they will no doubt have their shops, etc., at Port Mann, they have since made arrangements to tunnel under Mount Pleasant and come out at the head of False Creek, which is being filled in right down to Westminster Bridge. On this area a magnificent union depot is to be built, which will also be shared by the Great Northern and Northern Pacific, and probably other railways later on. There will be room for extensive warehouses, sidings, and many other things on this area.

The Great Northern already runs into Vancouver,

but its station—well, the less said about it the better. It is located in Chinatown, and is, if possible, worse than the E. and N. depot in Victoria.

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Chinatown is a great institution; it is quite interesting to see the Chinese stores with all kinds of weird-looking eatables in them. There is a temple there, although you wouldn't think it if you didn't know it was there, for it is to all external appearance just one house in a row, also a theatre, and most extraordinary are the performances which take place in it. The Pekin Restaurant is quite an attractive-looking place, with green window-boxes, and shrubs in large pots at the entrance. But I have never ventured inside; one never knows what wonderful dishes might not be served there.

Naturally, nearly all the Celestials here belong to the lower classes, shopkeepers or labourers, but occasionally one sees a richly dressed lady walking along the street with a couple of children, all wearing beautifully worked silk coats and wide trousers; blue and black seem to be the favourite colours, and sometimes rich patterns are embroidered on them in brilliant hues, but always very tastefully. They wear close-fitting skull caps, and those horrible little wooden shoes that pinch the feet so cruelly.[1]

There are many Japanese in the city too; they live in another quarter. No Orientals are looked upon with favour by the white population, especially the labouring classes; they can make a living where a white man would starve, and all their savings go right off to China or Japan, as the case may be; they spend next to nothing in this country. If the

[1] These have now been abolished by law in China.

banks could disclose the amounts they remit to the Orient every week, it would be a startling revelation.

But there is a remarkable difference between the two races. John Chinaman trades on credit; he pays all his debts scrupulously on Chinese New Year's Day (which, by the way, has now been altered so as to coincide with ours); but Mr. Jap has to pay cash down for everything he buys; he is not trusted farther than he is seen.

Japanese "boys," many of whom are over forty, are extensively employed as waiters in the hotels and clubs: the Chinese are mostly cooks, domestic servants, gardeners, and in the laundry business. If you are lucky enough to live within the sphere of influence of a good Celestial launderer, you can get your washing done most excellently and very cheaply. Many people, however, refuse to employ Oriental labour on principle, preferring to put up with the shortcomings of the steam laundries. Although there are many of these, they are all controlled by a combine, so that there is not much to choose between them.

The servant problem is a very serious one out here, and in this respect the Chinese are a real boon. It is practically impossible to get a white girl as a domestic servant, except a young girl who may give you what time she can spare from her attendance at school if you offer her sufficient inducements and submit to her terms. The ultra-rich can import servants periodically direct from England, but before they have been out here very long they go off to work in offices or stores, finding that much more congenial, and even if they resist this, they soon go off and get married.

I once met a young couple who had come out from England accompanied by an elderly domestic who had been in the family for generations—that is, her forbears had. I spoke of the servant problem to them, and they congratulated themselves on their foresight in solving that problem so effectually. Three months later I went out to dine with them, and found my hostess in dismay; the faithful old retainer had that very day gone off to get married, and, to add insult to injury, she had gone without giving notice!

Out here ladies who were used to three or four servants at home generally have to do without any. They soon get into the way of doing their own cooking, and washing up after meals. But it is a terrible tie when there are young children. The mother can never go out in the evening unless some kind neighbour takes care of the baby. So neighbours have to work it turn about.

Those who can afford it can get a Chinaman to do the cooking and housework, and most excellent servants they make, but ordinary folks generally take a share in one. That is to say, he goes round a number of houses, spending a morning or afternoon at each place so many times a week, doing the "chores"—i.e. scrubbing floors, chopping wood, and such heavy work.

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No wonder, under these circumstances, that so many people are taking to flats now! Long before an apartment block in the West End is half built every suite has been taken. Many of these suites are delightful, but the rooms are usually very small. And they are very expensive. There are many

apartment blocks farther afield now, but these are mostly built of wood. Parts of Kitsilano are becoming quite unrecognizable now with all these great blocks going up.

Many people are adopting the American plan of living in a flat and having their meals out. It saves an immense lot of trouble, but it destroys the home life.

There are lots of restaurants here to suit all purses; you can have a meal for $2.50 or more, according to your fancy, and listen to the orchestra at one of the swagger places, or you can have an excellent meal for two bits (25 cents) in a less pretentious but quite clean and attractive place. Quick-lunch counters abound, where you sit on a high stool and have things almost thrown into your mouth, rushing back to your office in ten or fifteen minutes.

Or you can go to a cafeteria, and take up a tray, which you slide along a counter all round the room, helping yourself as you go, or being rapidly served as you pass opposite the hot joints or vegetables. When you have got all you want, a lady at the end of the counter casts her eye for an instant over your tray, and then punches a ticket for you stating the exact amount you owe. But you don't pay until you leave. You carry your tray across to a table, where you sit down and have your meal in peace, listening to a very good orchestra. There are no waiters except the men who clear away the trays, etc., that are done with. Occasionally you see a cheechahko[1] come in and sit down at a table, vainly calling for a waiter.

[1] Greenhorn.

Nobody takes the least notice, until finally the stranger "catches on" and gets up to take his place in the queue leading up to the pile of trays.

All these places are fearfully crowded during the busy hours, especially the quick-lunch counters. Unlike Old Country feeding-places, these do a great business at breakfast-time. The busiest time for lunch is from 12 to 1, and for dinner from 6 to 7 p.m. Afternoon tea is not a generally recognized meal outside of the clubs and ladies' social gatherings, but during recent years a number of tea-shops have been opened, which are well patronized, of course by Old Country people.

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There are lots of amusements in Vancouver, theatres, concerts, varieties, and so on. There used frequently to be something good on at the Opera House; many of the leading lights of the English and American stages would come. But a few years ago the lease expired, and the Opera House has been taken over as a variety theatre. A new one is to be built, but in the meantime there is no place where a good company can come, for neither of the other theatres is large enough. There are two Varieties which are quite decent, and several inferior ones, besides innumerable picture shows. The term "cinema" is not used here. Some of these picture shows are very fine; the "Dominion" is a magnificent place, and has quite a good orchestra besides showing really good films.

During the winter and spring months there are lots of dances, mostly subscription ones. Dancing is rather different from what it is in the Old

COURT HOUSE.

C.P.R. DEPOT.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY ARCH.

CHINESE ARCH.

Visit of T.R.H. the Duke and Duchess of Connaught and Princess Patricia, 1912; some of the decorations in Vancouver.

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Country ; you go a few times round in one direction and then reverse ; nobody ever thinks of going all round the room without reversing. The skating rink is a very popular institution. It is very rarely that there is any open-air skating here, and until the rink was opened there was no opportunity for ice skating at all. This also is somewhat different from the practice over there. There are only two ways of skating in vogue, straight forward and waltzing. You cannot go round on the outside edge without getting in people's way, and one very seldom sees any figure skating. There are, however, some very fine figure skaters among the Canadians. Hockey is played a great deal, and a fast game is most interesting to watch. The term " hockey " always means the game on the ice over here ; the game on dry land is practically unknown.

Football and cricket are played a good deal, but the great spectacular games are baseball and lacrosse. These would both be splendid games if they were always played cleanly, but unfortunately the true sporting spirit is very often conspicuous by its absence, and fouls are occurring incessantly. The horrible practice of " rooting " jars very much upon any one used to Old Country ways. It consists in the spectators jeering and making uncomplimentary remarks, catcalls, and all sorts of horrible noises in order to put a man off his game, at the moment when he most needs to have all his wits about him. It is an abominable thing, but it is always done by the partisans of both sides alike, and is considered a legitimate practice and an integral part of the game.

In summer there are band concerts in Stanley

Park, Kitsilano, and English Bay. The pierrots on the beach at the last-named place are a great attraction; enormous crowds gather there on fine summer evenings.

It is a great place for swimming and boating, but one has to be careful on account of the currents. Old Joe, the dusky professor of the natatorial art, is constantly on duty there, and many a life has he saved. He is adored by the children who frequent the beach.

Sailing is a prominent feature here. Innumerable small yachts and gasolene launches are to be seen outside Coal Harbour, near the main entrance to Stanley Park. Here the Yacht Club and the Rowing Club have their respective headquarters. You can sail out through the Narrows, right out past Point Atkinson, and in to explore the beauties of Howe Sound, or visit a summer resort on Bowen Island, or even go farther up the coast, if you are venturesome. But, except in very fine weather, it is safer for very small craft to stick to inland waters, and go up the Inlet, through the Second Narrows, and up into the North Arm, where you can sail up the eighteen miles to Indian River amid the most glorious mountain scenery. Many summer bungalows are situated on the North Arm; it is so convenient for any one possessing a gasolene launch to go in each morning to the city, and return to the delights of the fragrant forest and refreshing water in the cool of the evening. The water of the North Arm is dark and deep; there are delightful little rocky coves and sandy beaches where one can enjoy a swim.

It is generally a couple of miles wide, but near

the mouth it is narrower, and a small island in the middle leaves two passages of about half a mile each at one place. There is a project of bridging it here, and running a railway along the north shore of Burrard Inlet, connecting with the main line of the C.P.R. near Port Moody. But a far more feasible scheme is the much discussed Second Narrows Bridge, which will no doubt be built before many years have passed. The Pacific Great Eastern Railway, coming down from Fort George, will reach the coast at Newport, at the head of Howe Sound, but will certainly be continued from there round the coast to North Vancouver, and it is not likely that the Terminal City will allow its northern suburb to possess the terminus of a great trans-continental railway; the Second Narrows Bridge will enable the line to run right into Vancouver.

I refer to the P.G.E. as a trans-continental line, for it is understood that it is to be taken over by the Grand Trunk Pacific, thus enabling that line to run to the western metropolis as well as to Prince Rupert. There will, moreover, probably be other railways before very long, approaching Vancouver from the north.

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North Vancouver is undoubtedly one of the city's most pleasant suburbs. It is reached by a ferry, which crosses the two miles and a half of intervening water at frequent intervals all day, the fare being the very modest sum of a nickel, or less if you get a number of tickets in advance.

Like the city itself, it is laid out on the deadly monotonous rectangular block system, which is,

however, very convenient when you want to find any place. For instance, if you are at 3408 Sixth Avenue, W., and you want to go to 1186 Twenty-first Avenue, E., you know that you have got to go across fourteen intermediate avenues before reaching the one you want, and to go forty-five blocks along the avenue, thirty-four to reach the zero point, and eleven more east from there, for a hundred house numbers are allotted to every block, even if there is only room for four houses in it. There are never, by any chance, a hundred houses in a block; the numbers jump about in a way startling to one used to Old Country methods. You are further helped by the fact that all the odd numbers throughout the city and suburbs are on the north and west sides of the streets.

But, to return from this digression, the great advantage of North Vancouver lies in its southern aspect. It gets the sun all day, and spring begins here several weeks earlier than on the south side of the Inlet. The maples and other greenery, which are such an attractive feature, put on their spring robes while those on the south side are still deep in their winter slumbers. In the gardens the difference is very marked.

And from the higher parts of the town, what a magnificent view is obtained! One looks down upon the whole of Vancouver, Shaughnessey Heights and all. Burrard Inlet, extending away round to the left, False Creek, surrounded by the city, and the Fraser River away beyond—all are laid out like a relief map before us: the Narrows, Stanley Park standing up with its tall forest trees, almost surrounded by the beautiful blue waters of the

Inlet; English Bay beyond, then Kitsilano, and the great peninsula of Point Grey, beyond which one can see the silver sparkle of the Fraser mouth.

On a clear day one can see miles away, but not in the middle of the day, for then, the sun being in the south, it is too hazy in that direction. But to get the best view we must climb to the top of Grouse Mountain; it is quite an easy climb, there is a trail all the way up. And it is worth the climb simply to drink in the glorious air and revel in the view. Away below us like a map lies Vancouver, and all the country around. The Fraser forms a broad band of silver running down past New Westminster to the sea, dividing into two branches which surround the great plain of Lulu Island.

Away beyond, sparkling in the sun, is Boundary Bay, which, reaching up this side of the 49th parallel, cuts off the end of Point Roberts from the rest of the State of Washington.

Then the broad expanse of the Straits of Georgia, and the Gulf Islands, the mountains of Vancouver Island to the right, and, crowning the whole scene, if it is very clear, we can see the rugged peaks of the Olympic Mountains, ninety miles away.

Looking to the left, we have the rich Fraser Valley extending away up as far as the eye can reach, the snow-clad dome of Mount Baker rising solitary and majestic in the distance.

Or sometimes, if the light is good, we may see a whole range of peaks in the Cascades, but Mount Baker is always by far the most prominent.

But at last we must tear ourselves away from the fascinating scene and retrace our steps down

through the forest, emerging finally on to Lonsdale Avenue, which we follow down to the car terminus, and there if we are lucky we catch a car down to the ferry, and so back home.

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The ascent of Grouse Mountain is a favourite Sunday trip, taking lunch with you and spending a lazy day basking in the sun on the top. There has been talk for some years of a funicular railway and a summer hotel, but that has not materialized yet.

But the greatest show place of the north side, vying with Stanley Park for the distinction of being the greatest show-place in all the surroundings of Vancouver, is the famous Capilano Cañon. It is *par excellence* the place of pilgrimage on public holidays; on Easter Monday, Whit Monday, Empire Day and so on, the inhabitants of the city are to be seen flocking out in their thousands, armed with luncheon-baskets and kodaks. Automobiles galore, private and public, cross over on the ferry, and whirl their occupants in a few minutes up to the Suspension Bridge, or right on to the dam. Extra street cars emerge from nowhere, and run out from the ferry every few minutes along all three lines, every car crowded to its utmost capacity with holiday-makers; the conductor has a fearful time squeezing through to collect the fares.

The Capilano line runs right up now to within quite a short distance of the Suspension Bridge; you used to have a mile and a half to walk before getting there. At one place the overloaded car crosses a trestle bridge over a deep ravine, travelling at a great rate and swaying from side to side. We

SUSPENSION BRIDGE, CAPILANO CAÑON.

CAPILANO FLUME.

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cannot see the bridge, only the dizzy drop below; some of the passengers get quite nervous. But we get safely to the end of the line at last, and then what a relief it is to unpack, for it is really a process of unpacking, getting out of that hot mass of humanity, so closely packed that one couldn't move hand or foot, and the people on the seats were nearly smothered. They stream out, one after another; it seems that at least fifty must have got out, and yet the pressure is scarcely relieved at all where we are. At last we can move, and, after a long struggle, we finally find ourselves on the white, dusty road.

It doesn't sound a particularly attractive way of holiday-making, does it? But what follows is worth the discomfort of the journey.

It is fortunate that the walk to the Suspension Bridge is short, for the dust raised by the autos is something appalling. But once there our troubles are ended—until we start to go home.

The investment of the sum of ten cents entitles us to walk over the famous bridge, which swings to such an extent, if you are not very careful, that it makes nervous people wish they had decided on Lynn Creek instead of Capilano for their day's outing. Some fools make the bridge sway on purpose to frighten their companions, but such people soon get told off by the caretaker.

It is worth while pausing in the middle to admire the view; 190 feet below us the little Capilano River rushes down, boiling among the rocks, for in the spring the snow melting in the mountains up above causes the small stream to swell to quite a torrent. Beautiful patches of

sward alongside the river form ideal picnic grounds. These are reached by precipitous trails which have been made in some of the "draws" which indent the sides of the cañon occasionally.

The country is densely timbered, mostly with cedar, and the shingle industry is in full swing here. Great cedars are felled and cut up into short lengths, which are floated down in a flume to the "shingle-mills" below, where they are cut up into the shingles which take the place of slates out here.

Alongside the flume is a plank walk, two planks wide, and this is the main highway for pleasure-seekers going up through the cañon. Sometimes the plank walk changes from one side of the flume to the other, and we have to step across. The flume is about three feet wide at the top, and the operation of crossing is always the cause of much dismay on the part of the ladies and much merriment on the part of their cavaliers. Frequently we come to a place where the planks are getting rotten, and we have to step gingerly over them, one at a time. We may even come to a broken plank, for this part of the flume walk is not a public thoroughfare, and its upkeep is purely a private concern of the owners. In places, where there are side ravines to cross, the flume is raised up on trestles twenty or thirty feet from the ground. With the water rushing madly by in the flume, one needs to have a steady head.

We could have come along on terra firma, for there is a trail running up all this part of the way, but it is usually very swampy in places, and the flume is much more direct. We have occasionally had a glimpse through the trees of the

cañon, but presently we emerge into the open, and behold a scene which amply repays all our trouble and discomfort on the way up.

We are on a rocky bluff. Far below roars the river, a sheer drop of two hundred feet. Downstream, the two sides recede for a distance, the dense forest extending right down the steep sides to the water's edge. But farther down the sides close in, and on one side is a vertical, even overhanging, cliff, four hundred feet high.

The First Cañon is a glorious sight, but it is surpassed by the Royal Cañon, through which we are about to pass. The pathway now is partly cut in the solid rock in the side of an almost vertical cliff, and partly formed by a plank walk, built on the trestles which support the flume, clinging to the face of the precipice, and made fast to it by means of strong iron bolts. Naturally the plank walk is more than two planks wide here, and securely fenced. The grey rock rises sheer above us, the far side being only a stone's throw away. And the green water rushes on below, churned up into a seething white mass every few yards as it swirls in and out among the great grey boulders. In the deep pools we can trace the whirling eddies.

Away down below us we can see a great log, a mighty forest giant, which has been washed down by the spring floods and become jammed among the rocks. Ahead of us, spanning the cañon at its upper extremity, is the picturesque rustic bridge by which we presently recross to the other side.

From here we can either climb up the steep

path to the Canyon View Hotel, where we refresh the inner man with an excellent luncheon, and afterwards wander out on to the bluff overlooking the cañon, or, if we have brought grub, we can make our way down into the flat bottom of the valley above the cañon, and find a quiet spot where we can sit in the shade on the soft grass and watch the incessant rush and tumble of the water over the rocks as we partake of our frugal repast.

Or, if we are energetic, we may trudge the remaining three miles along the road to the dam where Vancouver's water supply is stored. Here there is a splendid view down the valley, and also the more prosaic attraction, but one not to be sniffed at after our long walk, of another excellent hotel, at which we can fortify ourselves for the five-mile tramp back to the car-line.

The walk along the road in the forest shade is most enjoyable. Delicate wild flowers abound along the roadside, glorious maidenhairs, not quite the same as the English variety, but equally beautiful, and many other sorts of ferns. Now and then a blue jay, of gorgeous plumage, flies across in front of us. Or a bright scarlet woodpecker flits from tree to tree, stopping now and then to pick out a grub. Chirpy little chipmunks sit on the branches and scrutinize us from a safe distance.

On another occasion we go out to Lynn Creek, in the opposite direction from North Vancouver. Here there is also a cañon, not so majestic in its grandeur, but affording a feast of most glorious scenery for several miles. It is also reached by car from the ferry. There is quite a large suburb

FIRST CAÑON, CAPILANO CREEK.

ROYAL CAÑON, CAPILANO CREEK.

To face p. 279.

growing up around the end of the Lynn Creek car-line.

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The British Columbia Electric Railway, or B.C.E., as it is generally called, is a great feature in Vancouver; it is the one and only means of transit in the city, and between it and its extensive suburbs. The network of car lines extends out in all directions for miles, passing in places through primeval forest, in others past great clearings, where we see heaped up the stumps and roots which have been taken out to make the ground fit for building. These heaps, thirty or forty feet high, are burnt after the dry season is over.

If we go out to a district in which we have not been for some time, we find, where there was virgin forest a short time ago, an extensive suburb, numerous houses, plank sidewalks, street cars, perhaps a new suburban line starting at what we used to look upon as the end of all things, and going some miles farther out, through new subdivisions.

These car lines are regular railway tracks, of standard gauge and laid with heavy rails. And the cars are not the little toys familiar in the Old Country, but enormous vehicles on bogeys, which make such a row as they go along on a paved street that you simply cannot hear yourself think when a car is passing. What with the noise of the car itself and the clang of the bells, it is not good for persons afflicted with nerves to reside within a block of a car line, at any rate of one on a paved road.

In the outer suburbs the vast majority of the

roads consist practically of the natural surface of the ground, so that, even if one has an auto, or can afford a taxi, it is not a pleasant mode of locomotion, except on the main thoroughfares, once one leaves the city proper. After wet weather, the humble but useful bicycle ceases to be even a possible means of transit in the suburban districts. A few years ago the roads in the near-by suburb of Kitsilano were in such a state that the city tradespeople refused to deliver goods there. The place is growing at such a rate that it is a sheer impossibility for road-making to keep pace with building, but the suburban roads are gradually being improved.

The car service is frequent on most of the lines, but still hardly adequate for the needs of the populace; in the morning and evening, when people are going to and from business, the crush is awful. It is almost time there was an underground railway constructed; the car service cannot be increased very much without absolute congestion in the heart of the city.

On a Saturday evening every car coming in from the suburbs is crowded to its utmost capacity; the whole population of Greater Vancouver comes in to walk up and down Granville and Hastings Streets; they go backwards and forwards along that portion of these two streets which is most brilliantly lit by the store windows and street signs, about a mile and a half in all.

It is a regular parade; immense crowds walk up and down, up and down, all the evening. The theatres, the picture shows, the billiard saloons, and the other kind of saloons, are all packed, and

still the sidewalks are a dense mass of humanity, crawling along. A peculiar amusement, and rather a nuisance if you want to get anywhere or buy anything on a Saturday evening.

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The stores are kept open until ten on Saturday nights; it is a shameful thing for the poor attendants, who work long enough hours without that, and are not too well paid.

There are some very fine stores here. People sometimes talk as if Vancouver were an outlandish, semi-barbarous place, where it is difficult to get any of the comforts of civilization, but as a matter of fact there are few things one cannot get here. There are practically no manufactures here yet, although these are bound to come before very long, so everything has to be imported, and prices are consequently high.

But the stores are well stocked, and most attractive; window-dressing is a fine art here, as in the States. Department stores are a great feature out here; Timothy Eaton has not yet reached so far West as this, but David Spencer does a great business in every conceivable line. And there are several others who have blossomed out from one line of business into regular department stores. The Hudson's Bay Company's store is one of the best. Its original fur trading business is quite a secondary matter now; its depots are regular Whiteleys.

The drug stores are another striking feature here. Like the tobacconists, they are allowed to remain open on Sundays, and they take full advantage of the privilege. Stationery is a regular

sideline in a drug store; every drug store also comprises a "soda fountain," or bar, where one can get all kinds of fearful and wonderful iced drinks, ice-creams and their derivatives, known as sundaes, ice-cream sodas, and so on. During the hot weather these are very well patronized, and are really a great boon. But it is extraordinary how the Americans will indulge in ice-creams and iced drinks all through the winter.

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The Yankees, of whom there are naturally a large number here, are trying to make Vancouver into an American city. They are coming in by thousands, and spreading American customs. But the Canadians will not be bluffed: their ways seem very American to an Englishman, and they object to being told that they ought to do everything just as it is done in the Old Country, but they take good care to remain Canadian, and not American.

The population of the city is very mixed; it is an interesting study to watch the people as they pass in the street. That well-groomed individual coming out of the Bank of Commerce, and getting into his auto, is a rich lumber merchant. He came out from somewhere back east twenty years ago with nothing but what he stood up in. Now he lives in a palatial residence, and lords it with the best. But he hasn't got an "h" to his name.

That other prosperous-looking man, on the other hand, is obviously a gentleman. He is not really so well off as he looks, but manages to make both ends meet, and a little over, on his ranch somewhere up Chilliwack way, and when in town he is always faultlessly attired. The smartly dressed

UPPER BRIDGE, CAPILANO CAÑON.

LYNN CREEK RAPIDS.

To face p. 274.

young lady getting out of the street car is a stenographer, or, as you would say over there, a typist, in a large real estate office. She looks charming in the distance, and would still be so upon closer inspection, if the incessant contortions of her jaws didn't betray the fact that she is chewing gum. Those two younger girls are waitresses at one of the smaller hotels; they are recently out from Lancashire, and are discussing all sorts of plans for the future, being delighted with the high wages they get here.

Then comes an immaculately dressed young man, whose every feature proclaims the fact that "I am an Englishman, and not one of these ill-bred colonials." He turns in to the Post Office, for the English mail has arrived, and he is going to take his place in the long queue at one of the "General Delivery" wickets. He is expecting a certain registered letter from home, for he is a "remittance man," depending for his livelihood upon what he receives from across the water. He has not succeeded in getting a position such as he considers himself fitted for, and is too superior to take anything else, so now he spends his time loafing around his club, vaguely waiting for something to turn up.

There are many of this type here, and they do not altogether tend to impress the Canadians with the vast superiority of those who happen to be born on the other side of the water.

That lady who just got into the smart electric auto, and drove off herself, is the wife of one of the leading doctors here. She is doing some shopping, and, with true Canadian independence, dispenses

with a chauffeur. The big man who stepped aside to let her pass is a Swedish lumber-jack. He cannot speak much English, and his manners are somewhat uncouth, but he knows how to behave in the presence of a lady, which is more than a great many do here. See how he is just as polite to that poor old woman as he was to the rich lady. Very different are those two youths who swagger along, jostling the passers-by, chewing gum, and talking in the crudest of Western accents. They think they are as good as anybody, and take care that everybody knows it. That is the great fault of the way in which children are brought up out here, in Western Canada as well as in the States; the spirit of self-reliance and independence is instilled into them, but it is done to such an excessive extent as to make them precocious and impudent, with no respect for anybody. Those parents and school-teachers who want their children to grow up refined and with good manners have to exert a very close supervision over their behaviour in order to counteract this baneful influence. But, unfortunately, there is a very large proportion of the community which encourages such behaviour, under the miserable delusion that it indicates strength of character.

On the far side of the street is a Hindu, looking very meek and inoffensive, treated with silent contempt by most of the "superior race." But he holds his head high, although he does get out of the way. Look at the medals on his waistcoat; he has rendered valiant service to the Empire of which he is a citizen as much as any of the others, and more than many, and he finds it hard to be

treated as an "undesirable alien." The Hindu problem is indeed a difficult one; there is a lot to be said on both sides.

Then we see bank clerks; a Japanese waiter; more stenographers; an old Siwash *klooch*[1] from North Vancouver; a couple of miners down from Rossland on a holiday, fine, well-built men, who look magnificent in their working clothes, but most extraordinary in their ill fitting "glad rags."

That oily-faced man is a real estate dealer; he is a man to avoid. He has never actually been in trouble, but is known to sail very near the wind, and many of his dealings would not bear looking at in the light. Dealing in real estate is the chief "industry" out here, but that is only a phase, which must be got over before the place settles down to genuine industries. It is an easy way to make money, and, as everybody is anxious to get rich quickly with the least possible amount of work, the shady real estate dealers find lots of gullible victims.

Of course genuine real estate dealings are quite another matter. The dealers are not all sharks, but it is like the horse trade: any one in it is suspected of being a sharper unless he is known to be above suspicion.

Wild-cat mining schemes are another favourite means of extracting money from the gullible public, and hundreds of them are advertised with very attractive prospectuses describing the golden future of a proposition which very likely has no possible chance of ever paying a cent. Many sound propositions are ruined through the inordinate greed

[1] Indian woman.

of these money-grabbers. A proposition offered at a reasonable price is taken up by a group of speculators who have no intention of working it themselves, but simply "make a deal" on it, passing it on to another group at a considerably advanced figure. This process is repeated several times, until the proposition, which would have paid well if properly handled on a small scale, is so hopelessly over-capitalized that it has no possible chance of ever paying at all.

One has to be very careful about investing money in the West; it is necessary to have personal knowledge of the proposition, or of the people who are running it, before it is safe to part with one's hard-earned cash. Attractive prospectuses are to be treated with suspicion.

But there are lots of safe ways of investing money in mining, real estate, and other things, and fortunes will always continue to be made out here.

And even if one does not make a pile of money, there is a fascination about the country, an enchanting sense of freedom from constraint, such that few people, once they have got over the first shock and lived here for a time, ever want to go back across the water. Many people do not like it at first, but it grows upon one unconsciously. It frequently happens that people go back to the Old Land to settle after a number of years out here, looking forward to the comforts over there which they have so long missed, but having been there a week or two, pack up again and come back to British Columbia for good.

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CHAPTER VIII

DOWN THE COAST TO PANAMA

Having decided upon a trip home, the choice of a route was an important consideration. Rather than go direct, I wanted to go about a bit, and see some new places. Wishing to visit friends in Los Angeles, I conceived the idea of continuing southwards and crossing the continent in Mexico, fulfilling my long-cherished desire to visit the fascinating capital of that country. The unsettled state of affairs there, however, finally caused me to abandon that plan in favour of going still farther South, and crossing the continent where it can be done in two hours, at the same time seeing one of the wonders of the world under construction, namely, the Panama Canal.

As the steamers running between San Francisco and Panama are primarily freight boats, only carrying passengers as a sideline, the dates of their arrival and departure are not guaranteed, and it was therefore not safe to book beyond Panama. So I had to trust to Providence for accommodation for the rest of the trip. How Providence abused that trust will appear later on.

The trip from Vancouver to San Francisco was uneventful: the night boat to Seattle, a day in the

familiar streets of that busy city, then two days and three nights on the good ship *Governor*, where there are three berths in each small stateroom, one above the other, the lowest one being almost on the level of the floor. Every berth was occupied, for in winter every one who can spare the money and time likes to go South.

Then, on the third day, about 8 a.m., we enter the famous Golden Gate and steam up past Alcatraz Island into that magnificent harbour, famed throughout the world, San Francisco Bay.

I must plead guilty to a little disappointment at the appearance of the Golden Gate; I had expected something more impressive, more lofty heights on each side, but then I suppose one must see it from the east at sunset to realize its true beauty.

Passing the Presidio Military Reserve on the right, and the site of the Panama Pacific Exposition, as the ship turns round to the right, the great city gradually comes into view, an innumerable array of wharves projecting out along miles of shoreline, the central point and focus of the whole city being the imposing tower of the Ferry Building, from whence ferries run at short intervals all day to Oakland, Berkeley, Alameda, and other trans-bay points, for a large portion of the business population of "Frisco" lives across the bay.

It seems as if one would never cease turning to the right, for, curiously enough, San Francisco, like Cadiz (which it very much resembles in geographical situation, but on a larger scale), faces due east, so that, after entering the harbour from

CHINATOWN, SAN FRANCISCO.

MAZATLAN CATHEDRAL.

the west, one has to turn completely round in order to approach the wharf.

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Having only one day in which to see the city, I allow myself to be seized upon by one of the agents who throng the entrance to the wharf, selling tickets for sight-seeing autos, technically known as "rubberneck" cars. In true American style the guide describes the various points of interest to his victims through a megaphone from the front of the car.

The city is truly wonderful. A few short years after being destroyed by a terrible earthquake and a no less terrible fire, a new earthquake and fire-proof city has risen on the ruins of the old, a striking monument to the indomitable energy and pluck of the inhabitants! It is true that many open spaces still remain in the heart of the city, and in a few places one sees ruins left apparently untouched since the fatal day, perhaps as reminders. But the open spaces will not be vacant for long; magnificent buildings are going up on all sides, all of reinforced concrete, the only building material capable of withstanding an earthquake shock.

And the Golden Gate Park! One can hardly get a fair idea of it by rushing through it from end to end in an auto; it leaves one with an impression of vastness combined with perfect order and neatness. The main roads through the park, in spite of their magnificent vistas, are to my mind, however, the least interesting part of it; one longs to wander up some of the side roads and pathways, and get a peep at what lies hidden round the corner! One longs to get away from the almost oppressive

sense of vastness, and find some quiet, homely nook.

Then fifteen minutes at the Seal Rock, where hundreds of seals bask in the sun or flop lazily into and out of the water, quite regardless of the crowds of rubbernecks watching them from the mainland. We are here on the outer side of the peninsula, looking out on the broad waters of the Pacific. To the left is a vast expanse of beautiful sandy beach, a veritable bathers' paradise, but now deserted, for even in sunny California it is too cold for sea bathing in January.

Back to the city again through miles of handsome residential streets; up hill and down dale, for Frisco is a city of hills, and some of them steep ones too; electric cars running everywhere, up and down the most appalling gradients; back to the wharf, and our dollar's ride is over, but it was a dollar well spent.

In the afternoon a walk through Chinatown. Every city on the Pacific has its Chinatown, and I suppose nearly every city in North America too, but that of Frisco is world famous as a place of dark and mysterious happenings. After the earthquake it was found to be riddled with subterranean passages, but these have all been suppressed in the rebuilding.

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Another day on the briny, and Redondo Beach is reached, a popular watering-place and one of the ports of Los Angeles, which city is reached in an hour and a half by an electric train.

There is great rivalry between Los Angeles and San Francisco, the inhabitants of each declaring

that the climate and everything else of their own city is ideal, and that of the other very faulty. It is amusing how a stranger is collared and impressed with these facts on every conceivable occasion.

Los Angeles is like other American cities; natural difficulties form no obstacle; where a hill is too steep to climb, and too high to be graded down, it is just tunnelled through. But on the other hand, natural features are not taken advantage of as they are in Europe; the monotonous grid-iron system of laying out the streets is rigidly adhered to, with very few exceptions, whereas, by following the natural contours to some extent, a pleasing and diversified effect might have been obtained.

There are many delightful excursions to be made from Los Angeles, but my time was too short, and, returning to Frisco by a night train, I saw nothing of the Golden State except these two cities. How I very nearly lost my steamer trunk is of no particular interest to anybody else, but was of considerable interest to me at the time; it was taken to the wrong depot at Los Angeles, and only turned up at the right one four minutes before the departure of the last train that would land me in Frisco in time to catch the *San Juan* for Panama.

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The first call being Mazatlan, in Mexico, the next six days afford a welcome rest, devoted to letter-writing, reading, and making the acquaintance of the other passengers, of whom there are about twenty.

These are mostly Americans, making a pleasure trip from San Francisco to New York via Panama.

There are also a Spanish wine merchant, on his way to Guatemala, a lady of that city with her son and daughter, who are being educated in San Francisco, a Japanese, going to take up land near Mazatlan, as the conditions in California are becoming disagreeable for his countrymen, one other Britisher, Captain Talbot, and a nondescript American, Fraser, who is interested in rubber, and also incidentally in poker.

Captain Talbot and I played with him two evenings, but after that I decided that discretion was the better part of valour, and refused to be persuaded to join any more in the game. On the following night Captain Talbot won back $8 of his losses, and tried all he knew to get me to join in again and get back some of mine. Next night he lost $60, and came to the conclusion that I had been the wiser of the two!

After four days of calm sea, the weather gradually getting warmer, we double Cap San Lucas, the extreme point of Lower California, and on the following evening we are at the port of Mazatlan, and make our first acquaintance with Mexico. At least, it is the first for me and a good many of the others. This port is guarded by a conical island of very imposing appearance, but there is no harbour at all, and the water near the shore is so shallow that ships have to anchor about two miles from the town, all freight being taken to and from the ship in lighters.

After a number of gorgeous officials have been on board, and found that all is in order, we are permitted to go on shore, which we do in gasolene launches, being charged $1, gold, for the round trip.

STREET SCENE, ACAPULCO.

STREET SCENE, ACAPULCO.

To face p. 284.

As the Mexican dollar is worth just half an American one,[1] and those of the other republics have varying values below this, it is necessary, every time a price is quoted, to make sure which currency is meant, the American being referred to as "gold" and the others as "silver."

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It was a welcome change for me to see a picturesque Mexican town after the monotonous regularity of Canadian and American cities. Although even here the rectangular block system is followed to a large extent, still the picturesque houses, with their red-tiled roofs and barricaded windows, make a pleasing sight.

From the sea the town appears to be rich in palm-trees, but on walking through the streets one at first wonders where all these palms can be; there is not one to be seen, until, on peeping through the open doorway of some house, a glimpse of the patio or courtyard within is gained. For in Mexico, as in Spain, the houses face inwards, not outwards. To the street they present only small windows, shuttered and always protected by iron gratings. But on the inside is a bright, sunny court, with flowers, greenery, palms, and often a fountain, and it is on to this that the windows of the living rooms are turned. To the stranger, however, all this is a sealed book; only a transitory glimpse may now and then be obtained.

The streets are, of course, narrow, but not so dirty as I had expected; the sidewalks are very narrow and very high.

All the inhabitants are picturesque, the men with

[1] Written in 1913.

their enormous straw hats, with conical crowns and wide, upturned brims, generally riding on donkeys of such diminutive stature that their feet nearly touch the ground; the women, with their wonderful dark eyes and bright-coloured shawls, wearing no headgear but a brilliantly hued handkerchief. The footgear worn by the peasants is very characteristic, consisting of sandals formed by a thick piece of leather, held to the foot by triple leather thongs crossing diagonally over the toes, and others to hold the heel.

Mazatlan, being a large city, possesses a street car service, running from the railway-station, two miles off, up to the town, and on as far as the wharf. The cars are, of course, of the open type, and the motive power is furnished by a pair of very small mules.

The cathedral is a fine building, in front of which is a large plaza, the greater part of which is taken up by a nicely kept garden. The sacred edifice serves the twofold purpose of cathedral and wireless station, the wires being stretched from the spires to the dome at the opposite end of the building!

As the *San Juan* remains a whole day at Mazatlan, we have plenty of opportunity to take in all the sights of the city. This part of the country is quiet now, but nine months ago there was a regular massacre in these very streets!

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Two days more, keeping close to land all the time, brings us to Acapulco, a picturesquely situated town, rather smaller than Mazatlan, and with no railway connection. It was visited by a cyclone a month ago, and many buildings are in ruins as a

result. One district in the town is inhabited by the "natives"—that is, those who are still of pure native stock. The Mexicans, who are of all shades between pure white and almost pure Indian, keep themselves very distinct from the "natives." The houses of the latter are very haphazard jumbles of adobe walls and patched up roofs; there doesn't seem to be very much distinction between the part occupied by the hens and that occupied by the human beings. Even the cows, when there are any, seem to be on very familiar terms with the rest of the family.

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Another two days and we are at Salina Cruz, the terminus of the Tehuantepec Railway. In spite of the time of year, it has been very hot ever since leaving Acapulco, and the appearance of Salina Cruz is not inviting. For some hundreds of miles the coast has been dry and sandy, and this is a town built on sand. There is always a certain amount of wind, and it is necessary to wear coloured goggles, as much to protect one's eyes from the sand as from the glare of the sun.

At this port there are extensive wharves, where the ships transfer their freight directly to and from the railway cars.

There is only one other wharf between San Francisco and Panama; at all the other ports the freight is carried by the primitive system of lighters.

Nobody is sorry to leave this city of wind and dust, and continue our journey down the coast, now in an easterly direction. The character of the coast soon changes again, and now consists of

a flat belt of very fertile ground from twenty to fifty miles in width, with a sudden rise into mountainous country beyond, some peaks standing out very prominently, fifty, seventy, or even a hundred miles inland. This character continues all along the coast of Guatemala and Salvador.

Twelve hours from Salina Cruz brings us to the first Guatemalan port, Ocós, which consists of a number of thatched huts. In response to a signal from the shore, the captain takes the ship on to Champerico, another thatched village, two and a half hours' steaming farther on, which we reach at 6 p.m. There is a considerable amount of cargo, mostly coffee, to take on here, and the ship has to go back to Ocós to take some on there, before proceeding to San José de Guatemala, so that we have five days before us between these three ports. As there is railway communication from both Champerico and San José to Guatemala city, most of us decide to take the trip up to the capital city and spend the time in seeing something of the country.

So on the following morning, each carrying a small grip, and looking like a party of commercial travellers, we descend into a lighter, where we sit down on anything capable of being sat upon, and hold on hard, for the lighter is tossed about like a cockle-shell as she is rowed in to the pier. On reaching this we are lifted in a basket by a crane, and landed safely on the pier. Here we find ourselves in a shed, a sort of bonded warehouse, and before being allowed to leave it, we are requested to pay the sum of 50 cents, gold, each for the privilege of landing in the lighter. All of us pay it

meekly except Fraser, who declares that he is not going to be imposed upon in that way. But the diminutive official, apparently quite used to such procedure, without the least excitement, gives instructions to the non-commissioned officer in charge of some half-dozen equally diminutive, coffee-coloured soldiers, not to let that señor pass. So Fraser, not feeling equal to tackling the Guatemalan army single-handed, has to climb down ignominiously and pay like the rest! We are then installed in a number of trolleys, and conveyed by a tramway along the pier to the land, and up to the custom-house.

Here we have no trouble, finding the officials most reasonable, being chiefly on the look-out for firearms. Before leaving the custom-house we have all to sign our names on a piece of paper produced for the purpose.

The next thing is to change some money into the local currency. This is done by the American Consul next door, and we are initiated into the mysteries of the fearful and wonderful currency of the Republic of Guatemala. The rate of exchange at the moment is $18.50, Guatemalan, to $1, gold. In changing from gold to silver, or rather to paper, they give $18, and in changing back they take $19, but one always expects to be done in changing money. The currency of this republic is only by courtesy referred to as silver; it is really paper, and exceedingly dirty paper at that.

The last silver coinage minted for the republic some years ago could not be paid for, and it was accordingly taken over by the neighbouring republic of El Salvador, so that in that country one meets

with coins bearing the name of the Republic of Guatemala as often as those of El Salvador itself, whereas in Guatemala no silver coinage is ever seen, for all former issues seem either to be hoarded up in the banks or to have left the country also.

There are, however, two metallic coins in use, namely the real, of $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents, and the half-real. These are of nickel, the former being the same size as the American nickel, but in value only one-eighth of a Guatemala dollar, or peso, which is itself only worth a farthing more than an American nickel, being $2\frac{3}{4}$d. in English money.

We each change a $5 bill, getting in exchange a collection of excessively dirty bits of paper of varying sizes, amounting to $90 in value, which makes us feel like millionaires already. Most of the $1 bills are so much worn that they have long ago come to pieces where folded, and are held together by bits of stamp paper. They are mostly of a smaller size than the other bills, which is often the only way in which they can be distinguished, the inscription having become quite illegible through dirt.

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With our pockets bulging with banknotes, we proceed to the station, and there find that we cannot get a train to Guatemala City, but only as far as Retalhuleu, where we will have to spend the night, continuing the journey in the morning. The railway from Retalhuleu to Guatemala is owned by a different company, which naturally runs its trains so as not to connect with those from Champerico.

Captain Talbot thinks it is a very mean trick

NATIVE QUARTER, ACAPULCO.

NATIVE HOUSE, SALINA CRUZ.

Tofface p. 290.

to make us change at a place with an unpronounceable name. How on earth are we going to prevent ourselves from being carried away beyond it? It is a considerable relief to learn that the train doesn't go any farther, so that there is no danger of our being carried on too far.

Before going on board the train we again all have to sign our names, this time on a dirty half-sheet of writing-paper produced by the station-master.

At last we get off, at 1.45. The train is similar to an American local on a branch line, consisting only of day coaches; no sleepers are required in Guatemala, as no trains are run at night. The gauge is only three feet.

For any one, like myself, unused to tropical countries, the scenery is most fascinating: groves of bananas, with their enormous split leaves, sugar plantations, coffee, rubber, corn (i.e. maize), and hosts of weird-looking plants of all kinds, the vegetation being very prolific. Villages are frequent, all the houses being of the usual style, with low walls and enormous thatched roofs, and always lots of small coffee-coloured children in evidence, very scantily attired—in fact, many of them not being attired at all.

At four o'clock Retalhuleu is reached. By dint of hard practice, I can by this time almost pronounce the name without dislocating my tongue.

Here, after once more signing our names, we are let loose, and immediately besieged by a crowd of small brown boys, all wanting to carry our grips across to the hotel, in payment for which they are satisfied with the trifling sum of $1 each.

This is quite a picturesque little place, with the usual plaza and bandstand in front of the very large and magnificent church. There is no band playing this evening, but we are regaled with what is much more interesting, a performance upon the barimba, the national instrument. It is something like a xylophone, but about six feet long, and played by a quartet of very small barefooted boys, the eldest of whom does not look more than twelve years old, while the youngest can scarcely be eight. The instrument gives an exceedingly pleasing tone, and the playing of the boys is wonderful. If a quartet like this, with their barimba, could be transferred to an English or American music-hall stage, they would be regarded as infant prodigies.

Even in this remote corner of the globe one cannot escape from that product of twentieth-century civilization, the moving picture show. On the way up from Champerico we had made the acquaintance of an American, in business in this town, and his wife, and they very kindly asked us all to accompany them to the theatre. It is a special gala performance, and several important dignitaries of the town and province are pointed out to us among the audience.

The hotel is of the usual Spanish style, the bedrooms all on the first floor, opening on to a wide balcony running all round the courtyard. The food is quite good, but it seems peculiar that here, as everywhere in Central America, the coffee is not made from beans ground for each meal, but a bottle of coffee extract is placed on the table, and hot water is brought round after the meal, with which to fill the coffee cups or glasses.

The charges at the hotel are very moderate—only $20 each for dinner, bed, and breakfast!

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Next morning we leave Retalhuleu by train at 7 a.m., naturally having had to sign our names on another dirty piece of paper before starting.

All the morning we travel more or less parallel to the coast, in the flat country skirting the mountains, among which are some picturesque volcanic cones, which lend an additional element of beauty to the scenery.

At some of the stations, where a protracted halt is made, the train is besieged by swarms of women and girls selling attractive fruit and fearful and wonderful-looking sweetmeats. These are carried in baskets or trays on the head. On account of the quantity of flies feasting on the sweetmeats, none of us are brave enough to tackle any of these, but the fruit-sellers do well out of us. You can get a pineapple or a dozen large bananas for a paper dollar. If you buy anything costing less than a dollar, and tender a dirty bit of paper in payment, the invariable answer comes back: "*No hay vuelta*" ("There is no change"). But if you put the fruit back, and turn towards another woman, the first one soon discovers that she has change after all. In order to get at it she has to set down her basket and hunt about for her pocket, from which she extracts half a pound of nickel coins, and picks out therefrom the required amount of change.

Coconuts, costing a dollar each, are a great source of joy, the chief part of which is derived from the novelty of cutting through the green

fruity matter surrounding the nut, and then, when this is reached, boring a couple of holes in order to extract the milk. The actual drinking of this fluid and the eating of the white nutmeat are quite secondary matters. Then there are delicious oranges, abogado pears, full of creamy pulp, and other nameless varieties, all most refreshing in the hot train.

About one o'clock we reach Escuintla, where we have to wait an hour for the train coming up from San José, the time naturally being spent in a hotel close by, where an excellent lunch is served, this taking the place of a refreshment-room in the station.

Leaving Escuintla, the train heads for the mountains, the steep base of which is reached after a short and sinuous approach. Here the country is open, and as the train twists and turns, one has a changing view, now looking up at the pointed *Volcan de Agua*, or Volcano of Water, whose flank we are actually climbing, now towards the *Volcan de Fuego*, or Volcano of Fire, with its cluster of peaks, some miles to the east. Then we gaze out over the broad belt of flat country below us, with the ocean shimmering in the distance, and again other peaks along the mountain range come into view.

As the greater part of the rise of over four thousand feet has to be made within a distance of a very few miles, the railway forms a series of loops, climbing gradually up the flank of the mountain. At points one can see four or five loops below, the lowest of which we traversed an hour before. It is a magnificent experience; while

lacking the ruggedness of our own C.P.R. trip through the Rockies, this open expanse of the view below us has a grandeur of its own. As we mount higher, we distinguish the shimmer of the Pacific more clearly, and imagine that we see a speck representing the *San Juan* forty miles away, at San José.

Then a lake nestling among the mountains to the east comes into view, and gradually gets smaller as we rise yet higher above it.

At last we reach the beginning of the upper country, and commence to penetrate northwards in between the mountain spurs, still keeping on the flank of the Volcan de Agua, and once more surrounded by luxuriant vegetation.

Presently there bursts upon our view a long, narrow lake, which the railway skirts for several miles, fresh beauties being revealed at every turn. Our old friend the peak of the Volcan de Agua stands out on the far side of the lake, giving rise to a series of truly enchanting views, each more beautiful than the last. The water is quite hot, this being a volcanic lake. A halt of a few minutes at a station close to the shore enables us to test this for ourselves.

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Finally, after a most interesting journey, we reach the capital city, which bears the same name as the republic, at 5 p.m. This is a civilized city; there are not only cabs here, but actually taxis! From a guide-book purchased on the train, we learned that the hire of a cab by time is only at the very moderate rate of $20 an hour, and a taxi $40. There are several quite good hotels in the

city; the best one, the Gran Hotel, was full, so some of us came to the American House, a very comfortable place.

Guatemala is a city of about 100,000 inhabitants, built on the American plan, in rectangular blocks, the whole of the avenues and nearly all the streets being numbered, the streets to east and west of Sixth Avenue being designated by the appellations "Oriente" and "Poniente" respectively, much more high-sounding than the simple "Este" and "Oeste" of Panama. Similarly, the old city of Guatemala, forty miles away, is called "Antigua Guatemala," whereas the old city of Panama is merely "Vieja Panama."

Old Guatemala, generally referred to simply as "Antigua," was destroyed by an eruption of the Volcan de Agua some two hundred years ago, and, although it was rebuilt, and is still a flourishing city, the capital was removed to the safer location it now occupies.

The new capital is not particularly beautiful, the narrow, symmetrical, cobble-paved streets being rather monotonous. There are, of course, a number of very fine churches, one in particular, the Cerrito del Carmel, on a little hill just outside the city, being especially interesting. From here a splendid view of the city is obtained, the surrounding mountains forming a fine panorama.

Tram lines intersect the city in various directions, but the cars are very small and pulled by a single horse.

One of the most interesting sights is the Minerva Park. Here there are beautiful gardens filled with all kinds of flowers, ornamental ponds with

FRUIT-SELLERS AT A WAYSIDE STATION.

RELIEF MAP OF GUATEMALA.

GUATEMALA CATHEDRAL.

To face p. 236.

grotesque piles of rocks, some carved to represent animals, but on the whole bearing, at this time of year at any rate, an untidy and neglected appearance.

In another part of the park is the Minerva Temple, familiar to philatelists as forming the subject of the current 50-cent postage stamp. It is an imposing structure, built in commemoration of something or other, but of no apparent use, except for the dances which are sometimes held in it. It consists of a square floor, elevated some ten feet above the ground, from which it is reached by a flight of steps, continuous round all four sides. Above this is a Grecian roof, supported by massive columns, but there is no enclosure of any kind.

The chief attraction of Minerva Park, however, is the relief map of the republic, which is on a horizontal scale of 1 to 10,000 and a vertical one of 1 to 2,000. There are only two other such relief maps in the world—at least, so we were informed, and it is an object which well repays a visit, giving one at a glance a knowledge of the topography of the country, attainable in no other way without long study. The belt of flat land along the Pacific coast is seen, forming a striking contrast to the remainder of the country, which is mountainous throughout. And on the exaggerated vertical scale, the volcanic peaks have an exceedingly rugged appearance. Along the Pacific seaboard we see the three ports, Ocós, Champerico, and San José, and inland from the two latter respectively are the towns of Retalhuleu and Escuintla, close up to the base of the mountains. Then we can follow the course of the railway, loop after loop, as it

gradually climbs up the flank of the Volcan de Agua, on past the beautiful Lago de Amatitlan, and so to Guatemala city. Nestling amongst the mountains we see Antigua, and farther to the west the only other large town in the republic, namely, Quetzaltenango, high up in the mountains with no railway communication. Then we follow the course of the Northern Railway from the capital, away down through beautiful valleys, until it reaches the distant Atlantic coast at Puerto Barrios.

On the approach of a visitor an attendant appears, like an eagle from nowhere, descends upon the helpless visitor, and after describing the chief features of the map, informs him that for a small consideration he will turn on the water, causing all the rivers to flow, and so lending an additional appearance of reality to the thing. As he gave me quite a lot of information about the country, and I was feeling pleased because he had been able to understand my Spanish without any difficulty, and I had followed his descriptions equally easily, I thought that the consideration ought not to be too small, and consequently tendered a $5 bill, equal in value to a whole shilling, which was received with such gratitude that it was evidently considered unusually liberal, just as if one had given a real $5 bill on a similar occasion in Canada or the States!

* * * * *

There are some pleasant public gardens in the city; in one there is an enormous tree, one of the show objects of the place. There is generally a band in the evening in one or other of the gardens, usually composed of very small, dusky-complexioned

soldiers, who play very well, the conductors of these military bands being white men, very often Germans.

The people of the lower classes are mostly pretty dark skinned, being very largely intermixed with the natives, but certain regiments are composed of pure natives, and these are distinguished by their more than usually untidy uniforms, dirty straw hats in place of military caps, and the absence of footgear. No doubt they have boots of some sort, but they are generally seen without any.

In Guatemala we frequently see barimba quartets, and always enjoy listening to them, and admire the great skill displayed by the little street urchins who perform.

The market is an interesting place to visit. It is very large, but a great many people have to make use of the neighbouring streets to display their wares. Besides all kinds of foodstuffs, there are cloths, scarves, shawls, and all sorts of wearing apparel of gorgeous colours, some really artistic. And there are baskets of many kinds, the most prevalent being that known as "argana," consisting of two square baskets, not unlike small "frails," only made of finer material, fastened together by a number of strands of the same material, twisted into cords. These Siamese Twin baskets are slung over a horse's neck, where they can easily be got at by the rider, or they may be slung over a man's neck or shoulder. Various patterns are worked into these by means of coloured fibre.

About three miles from the city is La Reforma, where there are a number of fine public buildings, including a large barracks and a technical school.

There is also a fine set of buildings in which an exhibition was held a few years ago, and which are to be used again for a similar purpose in the near future.

A number of allegorical statues, and some of celebrated men in the history of the country, adorn the approach to and the avenue in front of the buildings. One of these statues has been made familiar by the 2-cent stamp.

The road to La Reforma forms the great Sunday evening walk for the citizens of Guatemala. There is a steam tramway going some miles into the country in this direction. Out here there are some very nice country residences, standing in large gardens.

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After two interesting days in this quaint little metropolis, we have to return to the coast, rejoining the ship at San José, a seven hours' railway journey, including a stop of two hours at Escuintla.

On reaching San José at 2.45, we find the loading of coffee on the *San Juan* by means of lighters still in full swing, and are told that they will not be able to take passengers on until five o'clock, so we have to put in the time as best we can. That is not very exciting, as the "town" consists of a number of small wooden shacks alongside the railway, and a few of the huts with tall thatched roofs, peculiar to this part of the world. Only a couple of wooden buildings along the sea-front have any pretensions to a civilized appearance.

Our party is increased by a number of other passengers, who came down by the train; they are mostly Germans, travelling for various firms.

STREET MARKET, GUATEMALA.

CORINTO, NICARAGUA.

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It seems that the greater part of the business in these parts is in the hands of the Teutons.

At five o'clock our luggage is taken on to the lighter, but when we attempt to get into the little iron cage, to be lowered after it, we are asked for our permits, and refused permission to go, upon our admission that we have no permits. On inquiry, it appears that a permit for embarkation must be obtained from the commandant of the port, whose office is at the extreme end of the water-front of the village. We have been waiting here for three hours, but nobody has thought of mentioning the fact to us that permits are required at all! Several of the new passengers are in the same fix.

So we all troop off to the commandant's office, only to be informed that the office closed at 3 p.m., and that we cannot possibly obtain permits now until the morning!

As our ship is due to sail at 6 p.m., we don't quite see the fun of this, and inquire whether it would not be possible to find the commandant at his residence, and get permits from him. After much discussion and delay, we are ushered into another room, where we encounter a gold-laced individual, who repeats to us the inexorable fact that the office closed at three, and that we are committing an unheard-of crime in asking for permits after that hour. On further explaining our situation to him, and again asking whether the august commandant cannot be found at home, and induced to depart for once from official formalities to the extent of giving us the required permits, even after the fatal hour of three, he, after much deliberation, and expatiation on the greatness of

our offence, retires to a desk at the far end of the room, in a little sanctum behind a partition, saying that he will see what can be done under the circumstances.

Presently a clerk approaches, and conducts two of our party into the holy of holies, and we now discover that we have been talking to no less a personage than the commandant himself for the last ten minutes!

Ultimately, two by two, we are all ushered into the august presence, and each receives the coveted paper, entitling us to the privilege of embarking on our ship, subject to the usual charge of 50 cents gold for the very uncomfortable trip on a lighter, sitting on bags of coffee, and being tossed about by the sea.

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It is actually 11.30 on the following morning when we steam away from San José, and a trip of six hours and a half brings us to Acajutla, in the Republic of El Salvador. Next morning the ship is officially received by the commandant, a big, handsome man, much more elaborately gold-laced than his confrère at San José. He turns out to be a German, formerly a non-commissioned officer in the army of the Fatherland, now a General, or something of that sort, in the Salvadoranian army. He is delighted to meet some of his fellow-countrymen.

The President of the republic was assassinated in the streets of San Salvador, the capital, a few days ago, and it is said that the deed was done by Guatemalans, and there is likely to be war between the two countries.

The whole Salvadoranian fleet is assembled in the roads of Acajutla, and looks truly formidable, one of the ships being painted white to look like an ironclad, but the other making no attempt to disguise the fact that it is built of wood!

Company after company of dusky troops is seen marching along the coast in the direction of the Guatemalan frontier, which certainly looks as though something were going to happen, but it transpires that they are only going along to a suitable spot to bathe!

Most of the passengers stay on board, but I want to see as much as possible, and go ashore with one of the Germans and have a look round the city. It is very similar to San José, the one street being paved with sand. It is very hot, and the water is very tempting, so we indulge in a most delightful bathe in the surf. It is highly exhilarating, especially with the knowledge that there are lots of sharks close by! However, as the native troops are going in fearlessly, we think it safe to risk the sharks, and the natives tell us that the sharks don't approach close to the shore at the place where we are.

Profiting by our experience at San José, we took the precaution of asking the commandant at what time he closed his office, and were told that we could come at any time before six, when the last lighter went out.

So, about five o'clock, we present ourselves at his office. But it is not so easy to get away, for he doesn't like to miss an opportunity to speak his native tongue. At first nothing will satisfy him short of our staying to dinner, but on our pointing

out that we have to get on board by six o'clock, he lets us off with a cocktail, a minimum of which he absolutely will not listen to a refusal. What with the preparation of the cocktail, and the recounting of many and various anecdotes, six o'clock comes along and finds us still without embarkation permits. As the commandant has obviously had more than one cocktail already, it is not easy to argue with him; he has to be humoured. But we don't want to lose our boat! However, to our relief, a nephew of his turns up, and tells us that he is also going a little way on the *San Juan,* so, as he has to get on board too, our minds are made easy.

When we finally do make our escape from the commandant's hospitality, we find that there is a boat to take passengers on board, and that we were, therefore, not dependent upon the lighters at all.

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Acajutla is connected with the capital by rail, but La Libertad, which is only twenty miles distant from San Salvador, has no rail connection, and travellers have to make the journey over the mountains on horse or mule back.

We are within a week of Panama now, and nobody is allowed to land anywhere, except by submitting to being placed in quarantine on arrival at Panama until a clear week has elapsed since the last embarkation. It is not much loss, however, not being able to go ashore at La Libertad, for the ship has to anchor about two miles from the shore, on account of the shallowness of the water, and the town appears to be very similar to others already seen.

We are joined by a number of new passengers

PANAMA CATHEDRAL.

AVENIDA B, PANAMA.

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at La Libertad, Germans, Frenchmen, Spaniards, and natives, most of whom have come down from the capital. Some of them actually witnessed the assassination of the President, and they say that all business has been at a standstill in San Salvador since that event.

Some of our passengers from Guatemala, travelling for various wholesale houses in France and Germany, went up to San Salvador by rail from Acajutla, and rejoined us at La Libertad. They have been able to do no business at all, the whole of their day in the capital having been occupied in getting permission to leave it! They first had to get the signature of the Minister of War on their permits, then that of the Prefect of the Police, and that of their own Ambassadors.

Two Spanish nuns, who came down from San Salvador, had great difficulty in obtaining permission to embark from the commandant of La Libertad, because their permits lacked the signature of one of the necessary magnates!

We call at one more Salvadoranian port, La Union, and again watch the loading and unloading of freight in lighters, for there is to be no more going ashore for us until we reach Panama. It seems rather strange, however, that the passengers who come on board at these points are allowed to mix freely with the others, because there is nothing to prevent us from catching any infection that they may carry.

Here we make the acquaintance of a new type of lighter; those we have hitherto seen, and gone ashore in, were all oval in shape, but here they are rectangular, and, with their rows of oars, remind

one of ancient Roman triremes, but, of course, with only one row of oars on each side.

La Union is on the shore of the great Gulf of Fonseca, that enormous hole in the southern side of Central America, the western shore of which belongs to El Salvador, the northern to Honduras, and the eastern to Nicaragua.

Amapala, the Pacific port of the Republic of Honduras, is, however, not on the mainland, but on an island, not far from the Salvadoranian shore. Captain Talbot left us here; he was not looking forward to the trip of forty miles in a little launch across to the Honduranian mainland, and the three days' journey on muleback up to Tegucigalpa, the capital. The landing-place on the mainland consists of a few shacks, where there is not even a decent place to sleep in. Such is the primitive state of affairs in Honduras.

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At La Union and Amapala a large number of native passengers come on board, but they mostly only go across the gulf to the Nicaraguan port of Corinto. It is quite a change to have such a crowd on board, and to hear the continual chatter of the dusky ladies, who speak a local patois of Spanish.

The flat strip of land which characterized the coasts of Guatemala and El Salvador does not continue on the east of the gulf; the Nicaraguan coast is mountainous, and much less monotonous.

At Corinto we see a wharf for the first time since leaving Salina Cruz, but there is no room at first, and we have to do some loading with lighters while waiting for a berth. After we get up to the wharf the procedure is much more expeditious.

There is so much freight to load and unload here, however, that we lie in port for two whole days, which pass very slowly, as we can't go ashore.

It is a pretty, landlocked harbour, and from the water the place looks more like a real village than anything we have seen since leaving Mexico except Amapala—that is, along the coast; of course I am not including the inland towns we saw in Guatemala in this comparison.

Sunset in Corinto harbour is a glorious sight; the graceful outline of the coconut palms silhouetted clearly against the rose-coloured sky, which gradually changes to a beautiful yellow, forms a scene hard to surpass in beauty, the colours are so splendid.

The monotony of our stay is relieved somewhat by the numerous bumboats which come alongside, selling gaily coloured parrots, all sorts of fruit, curios made of coconuts, tortoiseshell articles of many varieties, and, of course, picture postcards. Some of the curios are really interesting—coconut shells beautifully carved with elaborate designs, and stained black, bowls and other articles made from calabashes, and many other things.

Our last call is at San Juan del Sur, another Nicaraguan port, where we take on a quantity of rubber and pelts. Then, after two days' steaming past the shores of Costa Rica, across the Bay of David, round the Azuero Peninsula, and into the Gulf of Panama, we reach the famous spot upon which the eyes of the world are now turned,[1] just thirty days after leaving "Frisco."

During the last two days we saw large numbers

[1] Written before the war.

of turtles, some very large, and some remarkable fish of brilliant colours.

As the wharf at Balboa is full, the *San Juan* has to anchor in the roads, and, after the medical officer's inspection, we go off in a steam tender, first calling at the island which serves as a quarantine station, where all the passengers who have come on board during the last seven days are detained. A very pleasant and commodious place it looks, and I was told that the quarters are excellent. Incidentally the launch runs aground, owing to the falling tide, and for a time it looks as if we will have to wait for the change of tide to take us off, but finally, after many futile attempts, she is freed, and we proceed up to the canal entrance, passing on our right a chain of islands linked by breakwaters, and at length reach the wharf at Balboa, the Pacific port of the canal. From thence, after a long wait, a train takes us in ten minutes to the city of Panama.

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Since leaving Guatemala City, we have not seen anything in the shape of a town, and the lively bustle in Panama has quite a cheerful effect. For, what with the canal employees and the throngs of tourists, the city certainly does present a lively appearance.

The cities of Panama on the Pacific and Colon on the Atlantic are geographically within the Canal Zone, which extends for five miles on either side of the canal, but they have been excluded from it politically, the boundary having been so fixed as to leave a narrow neck of land uniting each of these cities to the area outside the zone.

PANAMA CEMETERY.

CHURCH OF SAN FRANCESCO, PANAMA.

ON TABOGA ISLAND.

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The sanitation of these two places is, however, under the control of the United States authorities, with the result that here, in the heart of Central America, in what was a few years ago one of the unhealthiest inhabited spots on the globe, you have a well-paved, spotlessly clean little city, as healthy and as pleasant to live in as could be desired.

The canal is rightly looked upon as one of the wonders of the world, and its colossal magnitude can only be grasped by actually seeing the work. But its accomplishment could never have been possible without that still greater feat of modern science, the splendid sanitation of the Canal Zone. The value of the work of Colonel Gorgas and his staff of the United States Army Medical Department cannot be over-estimated, for what has been done here can be done elsewhere.

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The streets of Panama are very narrow, and, with the tall, gabled houses, some of them are quite picturesque. Street car lines have been laid, but the cars have not yet arrived.[1] Transport is, however, already easy and cheap, as the open cabs, or flies, which swarm in the town, can be hired for ten cents, gold, for any distance within the city, a remarkable contrast to American cab fares.

There are a number of squares and gardens, very pretty with palms and other luxuriant tropical plants, and, of course, numerous churches besides the cathedral. This latter, although the first church to be located in the rebuilding of the city on its present site, was not completed until 1760. It is

[1] February 1913.

a handsome building, with two Moorish towers dominating the Plaza Independencia.

As in Guatemala, bands play in one or the other of the plazas nearly every evening, and the squares are then thronged with people of all shades. Sometimes it is a white band, and sometimes one of dusky hue, but, although they wear smart uniforms, there are no military bands, for the simple reason that there is no army in Panama. One sees small figures in khaki all over the town, but these are not soldiers, but police. They seem all to be of small stature, but very smart.

The town is not lacking in amusements; there are several moving picture shows, and a magnificent theatre, which forms part and parcel of the Government Building. But there are performances there only at intervals, when a company happens to call here on its way to or from South America.

Having come down the Pacific coast in a small and slow boat, taking a month from San Francisco, one can hardly realize that Panama is within a week of New York, and three days of New Orleans, and it is rather a shock at first to find what swarms of tourists are continually overrunning the isthmus. Apart from the crowds of private individuals, one party of two hundred from some eastern city arrived the same day as we did, and took up their quarters in the Tivoli, the great tourist hotel in the American town of Ancon, adjacent to Panama. And this is quite a usual occurrence.

There are numerous boats running from Colon to New York and New Orleans; of the former several run direct, but four boats a week, belonging to various companies, call at Jamaica,

CANAL ZONE HOUSES, CRISTOBAL.

CULEBRA CUT, PANAMA CANAL.

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which was my next destination. Under these circumstances I had been fondly imagining that there would be no difficulty in getting a berth. But, on inquiry at the various offices, I learned that all the berths had been taken for weeks ahead. It was only by a stroke of luck that I was able to secure one in a steamer sailing ten days after our arrival in Panama. So I had lots of time to look around.

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The climate of Panama is really not so bad as it has been painted. The temperature averages 80° Fahrenheit, rarely exceeding 15° above or below that, and never getting so hot as it sometimes does in New York or Paris. It always becomes cooler at night. During the spring there is a steady breeze blowing across the isthmus from Atlantic to Pacific (*not* from east to west, but from north to south, the Atlantic end of the canal actually being farther west than the Pacific end). The rainy season is in the summer, when it is more welcome, and there certainly is a very heavy rainfall. But it never rains incessantly all day; in fact, even in the heart of the wet season, the greater part of the day is rainless, and the ground very quickly dries up.

There still are a few mosquitoes, but the continuous application of oil, or rather larvicide, to the surface of the waters, and the draining of all swampy places wherever possible, has vastly reduced the numbers of these pests. The splendid work of the Medical Department has entirely stamped out yellow fever, and reduced malaria to a minimum.

All buildings in the Canal Zone, houses, offices, hospital buildings, and everything, are built with wide verandas all round on each storey, and mosquito netting outside each veranda, giving a sort of birdcage appearance, not at all unpleasing, and very characteristic.

Besides the Tivoli Hotel and a number of administrative buildings, the town of Ancon consists principally of the great hospital, built on the slope of Ancon Hill. It is approached from the town below by a gracefully winding avenue, lined on either side with majestic royal palms. A visit to the hospital is most interesting. It is a model of how a hospital should be run. The buildings are dotted about, roadways winding in and out among them; the terrible American rectangular block system has found no foothold here.

The dark green, birdcage buildings, set amongst the bright green of the well kept lawns, the neat roadways and paths, the graceful palms and other tropical plants, the bright flower-beds, all make a very cheerful scene.

A few of the buildings are the original French hospital buildings, but these have been brought up to date also. One frequently comes across some relic of the old French days in the Canal Zone, and it is satisfactory to note that the Americans always speak in terms of respect and admiration for the work of their predecessors, realizing the enormous advantages which they possess now, thanks to the progress of science.

The hospital wards are invariably bright, airy, and cheerful, well supplied with flowers and all that can add to the comfort of the patients. There

are separate wards for coloured patients, and different ones for "gold" and "silver" employees, the former being the American staff, who are paid in gold currency, and the latter the foreign employees, chiefly unskilled labourers, representing all the nations of Southern Europe, South and Central America, besides a large proportion of coloured labourers, mostly from the British West Indies.

Convalescents are sent to the Sanitarium (anglicé Sanatorium) on Taboga Island, twelve miles out in the Gulf. That is also a favourite pleasure trip from Panama, small steamers running at frequent intervals. There is a small and picturesque fishing village on the island, and several hotels. An ideal place for a quiet holiday, with delightful bathing.

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Another interesting trip from Panama is to the old city, known for many years as the richest and most luxurious city in the world, until it was sacked by Sir Henry Morgan, the famous buccaneer, in 1671. It lies five miles east from the present city, and it was entirely overgrown by the dense tropical growth, until recently it has been cleared to a certain extent, in order to enable the ruins to be visited. An excellent road leads there, as good as an English country road, passing a number of fine residences on the way. A car line extends about three miles in this direction.

The only buildings visible are the cathedral tower, a monastery, and two bridges, known as the King's and the Slaughterhouse Bridge respectively. I was given a lot of information about the place by a mounted policeman who happened

to come along about the same time as I did, and who, to my surprise, spoke perfect English, although his swarthy complexion proclaimed him unmistakably a true Panamanian.

The old city was founded in 1519, and throughout the middle portion of the sixteenth-century it was in its prime. It seems strange to think that where the banana-trees are growing in such luxuriance, there was a great and flourishing city nearly four centuries ago. How many other cities, equally great and luxurious, there have been in this part of the world in still earlier times, will probably never be known; traces of some have been found in various parts of Central America, but the dense tropical growth soon covers over everything completely. Not only are there quick-growing plants like banana-trees and a thousand and one kinds of shrubs, trees, and creepers, but even great forest trees are to be seen growing everywhere among the ruins of Old Panama.

Another object of interest is the cemetery in the present city. The surrounding walls are very thick, and are hollowed out on the inner side so as to form three tiers of arched recesses, which serve as vaults, practically open-air catacombs.

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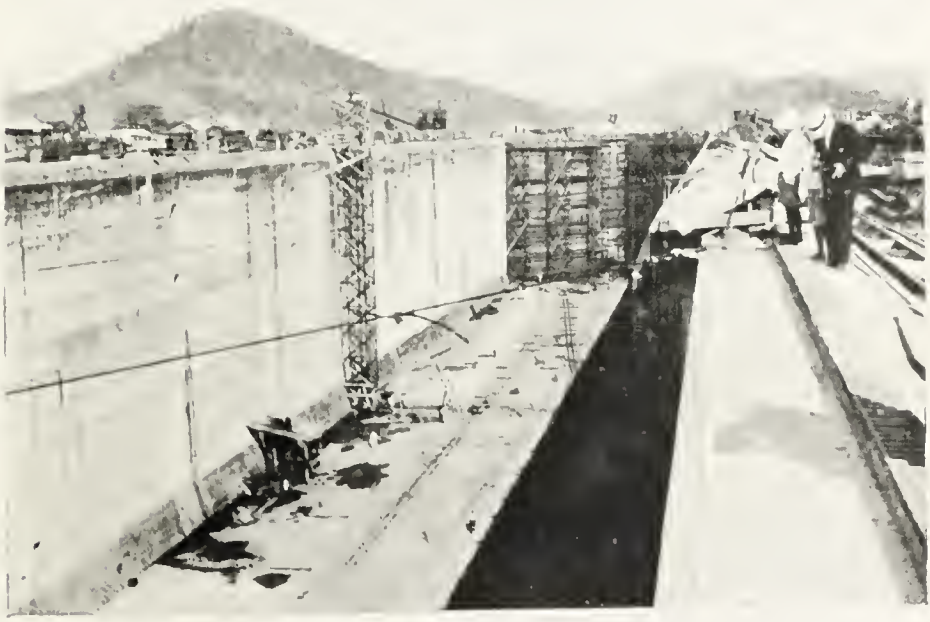
But everything in Panama is naturally subordinate in interest to the one all-absorbing object, the Canal itself.

The great question to be settled when the Americans took over the undertaking was, whether to carry out the original idea of a sea-level canal; or to have locks, making the central portion of the canal at a height above sea-level. The Inter-

CUCARRACHA SLIDE.



LOCK CHAMBER, PEDRO MIGUEL.

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national Commission, called together to discuss the matter, decided in favour of the former plan, and, with characteristic daring, President Roosevelt, on hearing their decision, immediately settled on the other. The lock scheme was accordingly adopted, and has proved to be the right thing; the extra labour involved in a sea-level canal, in view of the difficulties encountered with slides, would have been so stupendous as probably to have led to the abandonment of the undertaking.

So the central section, thirty-two miles long, is 85 feet above the level of the sea, this height being attained by means of a series of three locks at either end.

At the Atlantic end, the three locks are all together, at Gatun, eight miles from the ocean; but at the Pacific end the three are divided, one lock being at Pedro Miguel, at the end of the great Culebra Cut, and the other two at Miraflores, two miles nearer the Pacific. From here it is four miles to Balboa, the port, and a further four miles between the breakwater on one side and land on the other, until deep water is reached, making the canal fifty miles long over all.

Of the central section, eight miles is cut through the mountainous backbone of the isthmus, the famous Culebra Cut, three hundred feet deep in places; the remainder is in undulating, hilly country, following the valley of the Chagres River, but, owing to the elevation of the water level, a large area of land will be inundated, forming Gatun Lake, which will have an area of 164 square miles.

In order to form this artificial lake, the valley of the Chagres River is closed at Gatun by a

dam a mile and a half long, and so flat that one hardly realizes that it is a dam at all. Some distance away from the entrance to the locks is the spillway, a great sluice which will carry off the excess of water to drive the electrical power plant which will work the whole of the machinery connected with the locks.

It seems wonderful that in that narrow isthmus there can be a river large enough to supply enough water to keep the canal full, and have enough to spare for driving all the machinery ; but the river has been gauged throughout all seasons for a number of years, and it has been found that, by allowing the level of the lake to rise during the wet season to a height of 87 feet above sea-level, there will be sufficient water storage to allow of the passage of forty vessels daily, using the full length of the locks, during the three or four months of the dry season. And, as most ships will not need to use the full length of the locks, but will be able to make use of the intermediate gates, the number of passages possible will be considerably more than this.

Twenty-four miles of the canal passage, then, will be across a beautiful inland lake, dotted with islands, the channel being from five hundred to a thousand feet wide, and well marked by beacons.

The eight miles through the mountains has, of course, been the difficult portion of the work, not only on account of the enormous size of the cut necessary, but chiefly because of the great rock and earth slides which have taken place from time to time, even after the normal angle of repose had been reached, necessitating the removal of hundreds

of thousands of tons of additional material, and giving rise to serious doubts in the minds of many people as to whether the canal would ever be carried through at all.

But our cousins, having once undertaken to do a thing, are not so easily beaten, and, in spite of these tremendous setbacks, are in no way discouraged, but simply set to, and work on each slide as it comes, with redoubled energy.

It is a revelation to see this great "cut," with nine or ten tracks of rails along the bottom, rock drills at work in one place, steam shovels loading away debris in another, lifting six tons of earth or broken rock at every grab and depositing it in a railway wagon! Then there are the material trains crawling, snakelike, away towards some point where earth-filling is needed, probably the marsh lands at Balboa, where, when they are filled in, great workshops are to be erected.

* * * * *

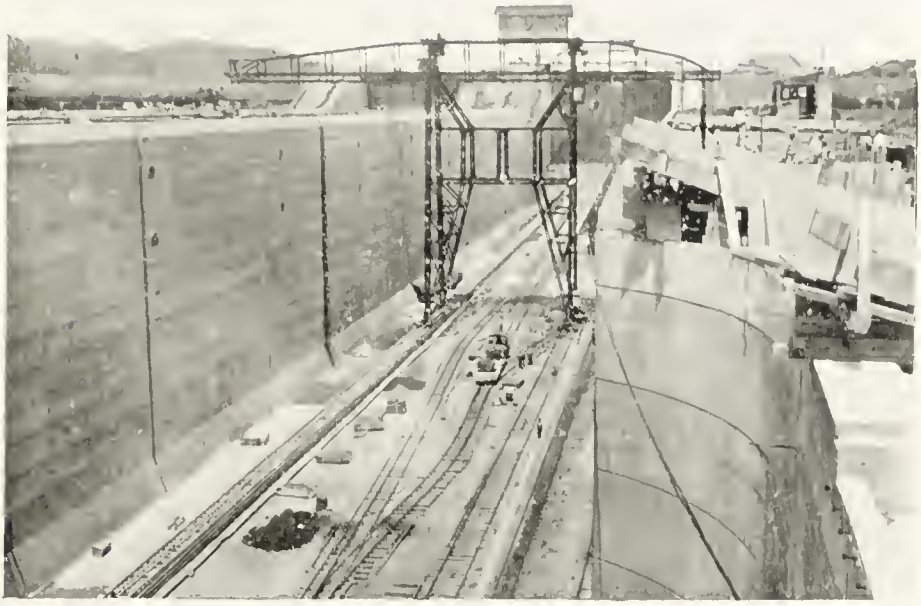
The locks themselves must be seen in order to realize in any way their dimensions. Each set of locks is in duplicate, so that vessels may be passing in both directions without interruption. Each lock chamber is 110 feet wide and 1,000 feet long, and will have a depth of from 41 to 47 feet of water, according to season. Intermediate gates divide these each into two compartments, 600 and 400 feet long respectively, so that the whole length of the chamber need only be used for the passage of the very largest vessels.

The flight of three locks at Gatun, with the approach walls, is nearly two-thirds of a mile in length.

The water will be passed into the sidewalls through great intakes, and travel along culverts as large as railway tunnels, passing into the chamber that has to be filled through cross culverts under the floor, so that it will well up from underneath throughout the area of the chamber, causing a steady rise, instead of the local rush of water as is inevitable with the usual arrangement of sluices in the lock-gates themselves.

Every possible precaution has been taken to ensure the smooth and safe working of this mighty enterprise. The greater number of the accidents in the Suez and other large canals are due to misunderstanding of the signals between the ships in the canal and the people on shore. This will be entirely prevented at Panama by the simple safeguard of not allowing ships to pass through the locks under their own steam under any circumstances.

The side walls are extended beyond the locks, so as to furnish ample wharfage accommodation for the largest vessels while waiting to go through. A ship, before passing through a lock, will be brought up to this wharf, where cables will be fastened, connecting her with four electric locomotives, two on each side, one ahead, pulling, the other behind, restraining. The ship will then be controlled entirely by the locomotives until she is through that lock, or set of locks. The locomotives work on racks, by means of which their speed is limited to two miles an hour, the two behind effectively preventing that speed from being exceeded at any time by the ship in the lock chamber. The rise from one lock chamber to the



CHAMBER CRANE, MIRAFLORES.

UPPER LOCKS, GATUN.

To face p. 318.

next being twenty-eight feet, the locomotives surmount this by means of a piece of track curved in a vertical plane, something like a segment of a switchback railway.

As a further protection against the danger of a lock gate being rammed, each gate is protected by a very heavy chain swung across in front of it. In addition to all this, as an extra safeguard, the end gates of each lock are in duplicate, so that in the unlikely event of one gate being rammed by a ship, there is still another beyond to prevent the water from escaping.

If, by some scarcely conceivable catastrophe, all the gates of one of the upper locks at Gatun should be damaged, the rush of water from the lake through the lock would be a tragedy of such appalling magnitude that it has been deemed advisable to guard against even such an unlikely event as this. That is done by means of a huge contrivance which can be swung out across the entrance to the lock, and from which a skeleton gate is let down in sections, upon which steel sheets are gradually let down, by degrees building up a complete gate across the lock entrance. Of course, such a gate would not be watertight, but it would be sufficiently so to enable the necessary repairs to the regular gates to be carried out.

Such is the thoroughness with which all possible contingencies have been foreseen and guarded against by the farseeing engineers entrusted with the colossal work.

* * * * *

It is no wonder that the Americans are proud of the Canal; each official, each workman, feels

a personal pride in the great undertaking which he is helping to carry through.

With the crowds of sightseers who are continually on the premises, it is obvious that some means must be provided to enable them to see all the most interesting parts of the Canal conveniently, and without interfering with the work. And this is very efficiently accomplished by means of sightseeing trains, which are run three times a week, twice from Panama, and once from Colon. The former take you over the central section, through the Culebra Cut, to Pedro Miguel and Miraflores, and over the Pacific section to Balboa; the latter takes you over the Atlantic section to Gatun, so that by taking the three trips, the whole of the chief features of the Canal may be seen.

And not the least interesting feature is the swarm of tourists who pour off the observation cars at each stopping place, armed with kodaks of all descriptions, snapping at everything in sight, standing in perilous positions on the edges of locks, or gazing in awe at one of the enormous monsters which serve the functions of cranes. There are many of truly titanic dimensions to be seen at Miraflores, all worked by electricity.

* * * * *

Colon itself is a most uninteresting place; no public squares, no bands, no attractions at all except the ubiquitous moving picture show; a great contrast after Panama.

The American town of Cristobal, built alongside, is pleasant and picturesque, with its birdcage houses, gracefully curved avenues, and palms; but it is not really a town, it is simply a large barracks,

or cantonment, the inhabitants being Canal employees.

Few people are sorry to leave Colon, and when I got on board the Royal Mail ss. *Oruba*, it was not without a certain feeling of relief. The pleasant run of forty-four hours to Kingston afforded a welcome rest after ten days of strenuous sight-seeing.

The island of Jamaica has been described by many in glowing terms, and no terms could be too glowing, for it would be hard to imagine a more lovely spot, if only it were not quite so hot!

Since Kingston was destroyed by the earthquake of 1907 it has been rebuilt, with no buildings of more than two stories, a striking contrast to the rebuilt city of San Francisco. The town itself is not interesting; the markets, and the black women going to and from them, with large baskets of fruit and other commodities on their heads, form the most picturesque feature.

The Myrtle Bank Hotel is the great tourist resort, with its pleasant garden sloping down to the sea, and here, on the night after the arrival of a steamer from New York, may be seen the great dress parade of all the latest "creations" from Fifth Avenue. Dances are frequently held here. The boats from New York and New Orleans generally stop over for twenty-four hours, in order to give the passengers time to "do" the island.

Port Royal, the old capital, on the end of the sandspit which forms the outer side of Kingston Harbour, is well worth a visit. The city was destroyed by the great earthquake of 1692, and it is now only a military post, no town remaining.

One of the chief objects of interest is Nelson's "Quarter Deck," the observation platform upon which that great sailor used to walk up and down, scanning the horizon for foreign sails, during his time on the island.

The effects of the earthquake are very evident: the old Town Hall, with its badly cracked walls, is pointed out; but the most remarkable thing is a small workshop, which was thrown over by the recent earthquake to an angle of about sixty degrees, without being damaged.

* * * * *

The West India Regiment has its headquarters at Up Park Camp, on the outskirts of Kingston. The officers and non-commissioned officers are all white, but the troops are natives, and form a most picturesque sight in their bright zouave costume, chosen for them by Queen Victoria.

The Constant Spring Hotel, some miles out in the country, reached by electric car, has been closed for some years—a great pity, as it is a most delightful spot, surrounded by luxurious gardens, and is itself a very fine building, possessing that most attractive feature in a hot climate, a large swimming-pool.

Then there are the Hope Gardens, which well repay a visit. These are the Botanical Gardens of Jamaica, and here one may see plants of all descriptions, palms, ferns, flowers, and almost everything that grows in the country.

But the real charm of Jamaica is in the country itself, right away from the towns. There are excellent roads all over the island; the trip across to the north coast, past Castleton Garden, with its

ON THE SHORE, ST. ANNE'S BAY, JAMAICA.

A COUNTRY ROAD, JAMAICA.

To face p. 322.

beautiful display of tree-ferns, to Anotta Bay, and thence along the coast past Port Antonio, is delightful beyond description. Every turn of the road brings fresh beauty into view; the bright blue sea, the rocky coast and sandy bays, bordered everywhere by graceful coconut palms and banana trees, form a series of pictures of entrancing beauty. And the luxuriant vegetation everywhere; gorgeous tree-ferns, bamboo hedges along the road, rubber trees, bread-fruit trees, with their strange leaves, magnificent trees of many varieties, generally affording foothold for all kinds of brilliant orchids, so costly in Europe, and scattered in such profusion here!

Beautiful meadows are seen, with cattle peacefully grazing; great trees scattered about; some parts remind one very much of the most delightful English country scenes, but, of course, the trees are all of varieties unknown in our temperate climate. One of the most delightful drives is through the Fern Gully, where, for three or four miles, one's eyes are continually feasted with scenes of the most exquisite beauty; ferns of all sorts, now and then a beautiful tree-fern, banana-trees standing out with their gracefully curved leaves here and there; and then we emerge into the open country once more, and the road is lined with coconut-palms and banana-trees, those ubiquitous plants, as useful as they are beautiful.

* * * * *

There is one thing which to some extent mars the enjoyment of the scenery: one dares not walk on the grass, but has to keep strictly to the road or footpath! This is on account of the pestilent little

grass-ticks, which swarm everywhere. It was not always so; formerly one could walk freely in the grass, but there were snakes, and in order to get rid of these they imported mongooses (one cannot get rid of the impulse to say "mongeese"), which effectually killed off the snakes. But it was discovered too late that a worse evil had been caused; the grass-ticks had formerly been kept down by the snakes, but, now that these have been killed off, they have increased to such an extent as to make walking in the grass impossible for white people. They are very small, almost invisible, and burrow under the skin, causing great irritation.

But, in spite of this great drawback, the scenery is so magnificent that one can be content to feast one's eyes on it from the road or footpath.

There are many beautiful places in Jamaica which I did not have time to visit; the trip up to Newcastle is a delightful one, and that up to the Blue Mountains one of the most fascinating imaginable, besides many others. All too soon the time came when I had to step on board the ss. *Manzanares*, bound for Avonmouth with its cargo of bananas and its handful of passengers, and say farewell for a time to the great New World.

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